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A CORNER OF THE COTSWOLDS THROUGH

T. BURFORD

(PAST AND PRESENT)

SOME ENGLISH RURAL PROBLEMS

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF GEORGE MEREDITH

(Published for Meredith's centenary by the Oxford University Press
and the Harvard, U.S.A., University Press)

OXFORDSHIRE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IN
THE 17TH CENTURY

CRUMPLIN, — A TALE OF THE 17TH CENTURY

RUE AND ROSEMARY

(For the 1995 Commemoration of Sir Thomas More)

by the same author



A CORNER OF THE COTSWOLDS THROUGH
THE 19TH CENTURY

A CALENDAR OF THE WAR (1914-1918)

SOME ENGLISH RURAL PROBLEMS

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THE 17TH CENTURY

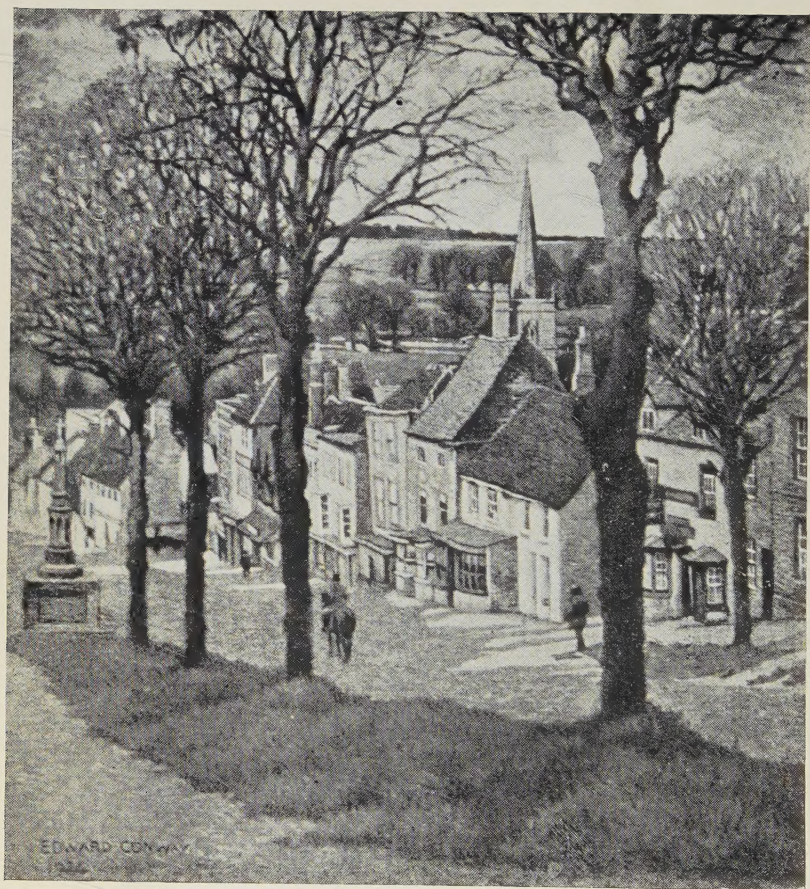
CRUMPLIN'—A TALE OF THE 15TH CENTURY

RUE AND ROSEMARY

(For the 1935 Commemoration of Sir Thomas More)



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BURFORD HIGH STREET
from a painting by H. E. Conway

BURFORD

PAST AND PRESENT

by

MARY STURGE GRETTON

(MRS. R. H. GRETTON, J.P., B.LITT. OXON.)

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NOTE

To the first—the 1920—edition of *Burford: Past and Present* my then long-standing friend W. Warde Fowler, D.Litt. ornithologist and sub-Rector of Lincoln College Oxford, contributed a commendatory Preface. Into that volume I had condensed years of my husband's research in the Record Office, the British Museum and through, then unsorted and uncatalogued, documents in Burford; and also my own delvings in the Bodleian and among earliest Oxfordshire news sheets and papers. As my husband's research had not come closer to our own time than the opening of the 1800's, even in the first edition, the concluding chapters—Chapters VII and VIII concerning 1800 to 1920—were entirely my work. Yet to those chapters, as to the subsequent 1929 second edition wherein those were greatly extended, he gave fullest attention and approval; we, in fact, checked that second edition, published in 1929, together, sentence by sentence.

Now, out of the fifteen years since Richard Gretton ceased working on Burford history—for eight of those he has no longer been living—war work, for me, has absorbed more than five. Yet, even if I would, in this interval, I could not entirely have neglected the mass of local history notes left in my hands combined with the welcome given to my subsequent editing of the seventeenth century records of Oxfordshire Justices of the Peace—first volume of a work of which Professor G. M. Trevelyan O.M., always generous in encouragement, has accepted the dedication. Long at back of my mind has lain consciousness that to the bountiful sharing with me of their knowledge by historians such as Harold Arthur Viscount Dillon, Dr. Warde Fowler, Lord Ernle, Lord Olivier, Dr. Bertha Putnam, Miss Maude V. Clarke, Mr. A. E. Stamp, Sir John Charles Fox, Conal O'Riordan and Professor Robert Mowat, my writing of local history owes all the completing and amending of which I am capable. And particularly, of course, such after-care is due to the untapped vein of material my late husband and I had unearthed for our working in Burford—so many years our home.

NOTE

Both editions of *Burford: Past and Present* for some time have been exhausted and, lately, second-hand copies have not been procurable. Friends have urged the book's reappearance. How Storm Jameson's more than generous estimate of its worth has caused that re-appearance, even in this overpressed moment, is explained in Chapter X—the completely new chapter—which alongside new matter in many other chapters, is now added.

MARY STURGE GRETTON

Calendars,
Burford: Oxon.
August 1944

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTORY	<i>page</i> 11
II. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TOWN	13
III. GROWTH OF THE TOWN	16
IV. THE CHURCH	36
V. THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL	54
VI. THE LORDS OF THE MANOR	62
VII. THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION	68
VIII. ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908	88
IX. 1908-28	110
X. SINCE 1928	130
INDEX	154

ILLUSTRATIONS

Burford High Street from a painting by H. E. Conway	<i>frontispiece</i>
Cellar under Bicycle Shop in High Street	<i>facing page 32</i>
The Tolsey (early 1500's), then merely the upper storey on pillars	33
Simon Wisdom's House (1576), and lower end of High Street	48
The George Inn, High Street Entrance	49
Archway in Witney Street (standing until 1918)	64
'Mr. Glyn's New Tenement' on Rent Roll of 1685 (now called 'The Great House')	65
The George Inn Yard	80
North-west view of the Church	81
The Vicarage, High Street (1672)	96
The Rectory, Priory Lane	97
Speaker Lenthall's 'Priory' Front (mid-1600's)	100
The 'Kingmaker's' Almshouse, Church Green	101
Entrance to Burford, from the Bridge (1815)	108
'The College' Arch, High Street	109
The 'Priory' Front now (and ever since John Lenthall's reduction of it in 1809)	112
South Front of the Priory recreated by E. J. Horniman	113
Entrance to one of Wisdom's houses <i>circa</i> 1570 (Harry Smith's home; now Wisdom's Close)	128
A Straight Frontage to mask a mediaeval house, added in the 1700's	129

ILLUSTRATIONS

Newly-Built Cottage in Lawrence Lane	<i>facing page</i> 132
Calendars, Front on Sheep Street (<i>circa</i> 1480)	133
Calendars, South, Courtyard Side (<i>circa</i> 1460)	140
Double-Fronted House in Sheep Street	141

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

That Burford possesses a special fascination is indisputable. Yet the exact nature of that fascination cannot be gauged at first sight. Folded among little hills at the foot of the Cotswolds, the town wears an aspect of slumberousness that interposes between the newcomer and immediate perception of its essential characteristic. That essential is the persistence of ancient vitality in the place. No later industrialism overlaid its mediaeval entity. National influences of 1830 to 1890 passed it by completely. From the discontinuing of the mail coaches till the coming of motor-cars Burford merely waited, losing, alas! individual beauties—such as the fifteenth-century chimney from *Witney Street* and the turret from the *Falkland Hall*—but, in comparison with most parts of England, being robbed of little of its grace. Broadway and Chipping Campden possess buildings without rival in Burford, but these places have not Burford's general unobscuredness: they have been revived and restored consciously. Burford, with fewer outstanding beauties, has retained its ancient entity. And that is the reason why the total of it is greater than the sum of its features.

Burford lies in the valley of the Windrush river, 300 to 500 feet above sea level. If it is approached from Shipton-under-Wychwood railway station, it is first seen lying enchanted in a deep hollow; its church, bridge, and houses in the water-meadows nestling and embosomed in greenery while the main street, climbing stark to the skyline behind, gives the domesticity a horizon and romance. If we come upon the town by the high-road along the ridge-top from Oxford and Witney, the stumpy willows, outlining the course of the Windrush, lead the valley into the tower of the Church as if they had been drawn by Perugino. Indeed, this view of Burford, from the top road, possesses in singular degree that moving quality of a 'drawn' scene which is rare in English landscape.

Through the ten centuries of its existence Burford has never been dominated by a squire. From 'Domesday' until the seventeenth cen-

INTRODUCTORY

tury its Lords of the Manor were regal and remote personages; from the seventeenth century till the nineteenth owners of *The Priory* were on bad terms with the town. First the Guild and then the Corporation were the town's masters. And the spirit of that long-continued self-government has proved ineradicable. Burford has shared fully in the 'discovery' of the Cotswolds by the intelligentia during the last fifty years; what it has not shared is the being taken over by the discoverers, in the manner that Broadway, for instance, has been taken. Many Burford houses are in the possession of newcomers, but, however personally liked and well treated, these 'foreigners' within the gate are not essential to Burford vitality. That is vested, permanently, in the artisans and descendants of the old-established tradesmen.

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TOWN

The position, and with it the date, of the original settlement on the site of Burford may be deduced from certain marked characteristics of this part of the Cotswolds.

The high ground at the top of the town is a portion of one of the spurs of the hill range which, descending from its bold north-west rampart, form the watersheds of the northern tributaries of the upper Thames. Between each pair of these streams—between the Churn and the Coln, the Coln and the Windrush, the Windrush and the Evenlode, the Evenlode and the Cherwell—irregular hilly ridges lead down to the great Thames valley. Throughout the Cotswold region the earthworks of prehistoric man keep mainly to the lofty north-west side, few being on the spurs between the rivers, and practically none where the spurs approach the Thames. Clearly the people who made these works, keeping, as they always did, to high ground, discovered that the south-westward trend of the main Cotswold range formed a natural way of avoiding the wooded and swampy Thames valley. It turned the head-waters of the Thames, and led between them and the head-waters of the Avon to the southern hills—to Avebury and Stonehenge. Burford lay off this ground. Our nearest earthworks are Windrush Camp, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles west, and the camp near Aldsworth. The line given by these two shows that the current of prehistoric life, whether coming from Hailes and Roel Gate Camps straight down the watershed by Norbury Camp, or crossing the upper watersheds from the direction of the Rollright Stones by way of Mangersbury and Idbury Camps, avoided the falling ground of the lower Windrush Valley, and turned south-westwards to cross to the southern hills by Poulton Camp (Ranbury Ring) and Bury Hill Camp.

The inhabiting of the site of Burford probably, then, was not earlier than the Bronze Age. Of the Roman occupation Burford possesses, apart from occasional discoveries of Roman coins, only one record. In 1914 a Roman coffin was found on the lower road from *Upton* to

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TOWN

Little Barrington, about a mile to the west of Burford. All trace of its contents had disappeared. At *Asthall*, about four miles distant (where *Akeman Street* crosses the *Windrush*), and at *Widford*, a mile and a half away, there are extensive signs of Roman settlement. But both these sites have a southward aspect. Burford is on a northward-facing slope.

The place of Burford in Anglo-Saxon records is owed to the fact that a new channel of communication must, by that time, have been opened. From its name, acquired then, it is clear that the ford must have come into use, providing a direct way from the northern and north-eastern Cotswolds to the upper—and easier—crossings of the Thames. To this situation, on what must have been a frequented route, is due Burford's importance at that date. It has been believed, on insufficient ground, that a Synod was held here in A.D. 685. A battle certainly took place here in A.D. 752. Burford was on the line of march from Wessex into Mercia and Mercia into Wessex, and the armies of the two met and fought here under Cuthred and Aethelbald. The name *Battle Edge* on the slope west of the town is supposed to mark the site of the battle; and Camden says that in his day the people of Burford used to 'make up a dragon and giant and carry them about in procession' on Midsummer Eve, in allusion to the standard carried (on one side or the other, for the chroniclers do not agree as to this) in the fight. From accounts of this battle the derivation of the name Burford has usually been given as *Beorb-Ford*, the Hill Ford. Yet this derivation rests on one chronicle alone. An alternative derivation, much better supported by the facts, is offered here, from *Burb-Ford*—the ford with defensive enclosure. This would modify quite naturally (which *Beorb-Ford* would not) into *Bureford*—the usual form of mediaeval documents—and ultimately produce Burford. Much evidence goes to suggest that probably there were here two *burhs*, or defensive works (one at the ford, and one at the top of the hill), and that it was from this fact Burford took its name. The existence of two *burhs* would be a distinctive mark, whereas Hill-Ford would have applied equally to any ford over the *Windrush* from *Minster Lovell* upwards.

The small settlement 'Domesday' records was by the riverside *burh*: the Church was there, the town mills, and the earliest houses. Fitz-Hamon's charter to Burford was granted within twenty years of the making of 'Domesday'. The community then consisted, apart

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TOWN

from *demesne servi*, of some forty households, and these would find space enough on the level ground near the Church. Thus the river-side *burh* gave the town's site; and probably the hill-top *burh* became the enclosure of the Manor House. For this early community, having close to the river only land with a northward-facing slope, had had to go to the top of the hill to find suitable arable land. Its ploughed fields lay on either side of what is now the road leading to *Lechlade*—ground with a gentle southward slope towards the *Shil* brook. It is therefore not unnatural that the *Manor House* should have been placed at this distance from the rest of the community.

The history of Burford's *Manor House* is very obscure. The records hardly mention any such place. (But there is evidence enough to show that it was situated where *Bury Barns* stands to-day.) The reason of this want of note is not difficult to suggest. Under William the First, Burford had been property of the fighting Bishop of Bayeux, Odo. But, on the Conqueror's death, Odo had risen against the Conqueror's heir. Consequently, at failure of Odo's rebellion, lands which included Burford were given by the Rufus to Robert Fitz-Hamon as reward for Robert's support against Odo. But Fitz-Hamon then, in 1088, was also being granted the Honour of Gloucester, which carried residences important as the Castle of Gloucester and the mansion of Tewkesbury. Why therefore should he have desired to sojourn in this outpost of his territories?

He did not so desire. And presently, to save himself further from trouble of arranging the conveyance of small quantities of corn and barley to Gloucester and Tewkesbury, he made a proposal to the dwellers in Burford. 'Why should you not', he asked, 'henceforth hold your houses in more independence—be able to sell or bequeath them; also by my permission have your own market—sell to strangers who cross your ford or traverse your upland on their journeys to Oxford; moreover set up a Gild?' Thus our earliest Charter was granted, the Charter Fitz-Hamon gave before the year 1100, to all persons of Burford—men and women alike. And so it came about that this place gained, by geographical separation from its overlord, early and remarkable independence, developing such civic consciousness that, before half of the 1200's had passed, it, astonishingly, was employing a COMMON SEAL; 'astonishingly' because in comparison with some number of Oxfordshire villages it was still a small settlement and not a rich one.

CHAPTER III

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

Even in the years of its highest development—1250 to 1500—relatively to some neighbouring Cotswold towns, Burford was not wealthy. The magnificent aspect of the wool trade—the wholesale dealing of persons such as the Midwinters of Northleach or the Grevels of Campden—does not appear in Burford's records. Comfortably circumstanced citizens, in some number, the place certainly possessed; but these were occupied in businesses subsidiary to the main trade. Often they were weavers, dyers, nappers, tailors; and, even when described as 'clothiers', were almost invariably dealers in woven products, not wool merchants.

For this two hundred and fifty years, however, Burford knew, at least, seemly prosperity. Its beautiful Church is enough proof that its inhabitants of this period could hold their heads as high, when they chose, as the inhabitants of any Cotswold town. In 1229 Burford's population had been about five hundred; by 1500 it had risen to between seven and eight hundred. At this time the town did not reach up the steeper part of its slope. Roughly speaking, it was a square; bounded by the river on the north, by the line of *Sheep Street* and *Witney Street* to the south, *The Priory* on the west, and the further end of *Witney Street* on the east. Until the mid-1400's the houses were almost entirely of wood, built throughout of timber uprights joined by laths filled in with plaster ('wattle and daub'), the whole set on a very low plinth of stone.¹ No quarry appears in our manorial documents until 1435. And it was not till considerably later that stone was at all freely used in Burford. Moreover, when it was employed, it was at first seldom used higher than the ground floor storey—upper storeys still being of timber with wattle and daub. This fact accounts for the present existence of ancient pointed archways in what to-day are inexplicable positions. These were the entrance doorways to the larger burgage houses of the late 1400's and early 1500's. (Survival of a number of those arches to-day, up and down Burford

¹ The plinth of the 1470 portion of *Calendars* is little more than a foot in height.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

High Street, is discussed in this book's closing chapter, in connection with a house now called *Calendars*—illustrative of a typical burgage dwelling in the 1400's.) These arched stone doorways are all of Burford's fifteenth century domestic architecture that can be viewed now by the casual visitor. Burford's choicest possessions, from fifteenth century relics to twentieth century flower-gardens, are not set out in 'front shop windows'. Excepting the doorways just spoken of, they are hidden. Examples such as the arch till recently in a side wall of *Witney Street*,¹ west of the building of which the now-called *Bull Cottage* is remaining portion; the noble stone-vaulted cellar beneath E. F. Aldridge's bicycle shop; and the interior of *Bull Cottage* itself deserve special mention, both because of their quality and in order to contradict recurring rumours that these are 'chapel' remnants or in some way ecclesiastically descended. Such ideas are groundless. For instance, *Bull Cottage* is identifiable in our records back to the year 1500 and in none of its deeds is it other than a dwelling-house. Indeed this notion 'must be connected with the *Church* or *The Priory*' surely betokens a curious want of imagination of those two centuries through which the chink, chink of master-masons on Burford Church was unceasing. And in which those stone-cutters, turning from journeymen into citizens, often paved their way and their welcome by beautifying their landlord's premises in the only fashion they thought worthy of stone—its endurance, expense, and continental traditions of working it.

Of Burford shops in the 1400's we have an interesting record. A grant of 1404 gives dimensions of a shop in *High Street* as 17 feet long, 7 feet broad, and 7 feet high. The curiously shallow depth, taken in conjunction with the sale of a shop without a tenement, shows that the shop cannot have been an isolated structure and yet was not within a house proper. It was a kind of stall erected against the front of a dwelling. And the stone-vaulted penthouses on wooden uprights which remain attached (though enclosed now by windows) to a number of houses in *High Street* are in fact those mediaeval shops. The salesman would store his goods within the dwelling, bringing them, by daylight only, into the penthouse for display and sale. The Letters Patent of Edward II, establishing the

¹ The wall that held this beautiful archway until 1918—see illustration facing page 64—is now end wall of the grocer's store-room.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

Bridge tolls in 1322, give us a picture of the goods that would be sold. Livestock of all sorts came—horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, goats; hides of horses and of oxen, both fresh and tanned; fleeces of sheep; skins of goats, of deer, of rabbits, hares, foxes, rats, squirrels; fresh and salt meat and bacon; fresh and salt salmon, mullet, conger eels and fresh-water eels, stockfish (salt cod) and ‘fish of Aberdeen’, which must have been red herrings. Various woven stuffs came for sale, as samite, diaper and baudekyn cloth; silk fabrics with and without gold embroidery; linen cloths of Galway and Worstead. Wine and cider are mentioned, oil, honey, cheese, butter, salt, peas and beans, as also verdigris and certain unguents. Iron, lead, copper and tin, horse-shoes, cart-wheel tyres, large and small nails, and brazing materials were to be had in the market; and so were wood, charcoal, turf and faggots.

Of the folk who lived in those houses and chattered in the buying and selling we are not without glimpses. We can see the humblest—the labourers of the manor domain—at their evening meal of soup made from cabbages and leeks. We know where bakers lived, and saddlers, and we can follow poor persons going to Church, on the anniversary of the death of some benefactor, to receive their dole of money or bread. We know of occasional thefts and robberies; and once of a kind of local feud continuing for some years, when two of our notable citizens went to the house of another and carried off, on one occasion a horse, on a second a mixed lot of property, and on yet a third a maid-servant. We know how John Spicer, Thomas Spicer, Henry Bishop, John Pynnock and John Cakebread aided the adornment of the Church. And we see that Burford men’s horizon could be wider than their little town in such cases as that of John Stowe, who married the heiress of the Turbervilles and so established the well-known family of Eyston of East Hendred who still bear Stowe’s arms. And even more marked is this with William Brampton, who followed Richard III to Bosworth Field, so much in the inner circle of Richard’s adherents that he was included in the small group of those attainted by the first Parliament of Henry VII.

In the second half of the 1500’s Burford began its advance up the hill, though not until 1570 have we documentary evidence of houses there. Indeed first mention of *The Tolsey* itself is in 1561; it consisted of an upper storey carried on pillars. Opposite *The Tolsey* stood *The*

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

High Cross.¹ Now, in the late 1500's richer men are apparent. Formerly many of the townsfolk had retained their farm-land holdings and not much difference in prosperity had been evident between those who traded within the town and those remaining in the agricultural hamlets. But after 1550 it is easy to see the flourishing market town as distinct from the farmers around it. Forty-seven Burford men are entered on a Muster Roll as being of substance to equip themselves or their substitutes as archers, and forty-one to do the same as billmen. And this is a better total than Witney, for instance, could produce at that date. All the Burford trades of earlier times were remaining in existence, while saddlers—for whom the place was soon to be famous—were increasing. Already, too, it was a town of hostelries, and grant of *The George* some time back,² and again now, to a servant of the Royal Household shows that one at least of them had become notably worth possessing. Mills had increased; besides the two known as 'Burford Mills' there was now a corn-mill at *Upton*, and a fulling-mill had appeared within Burford. The house on the site of what is now *Bury Barns* was still, in real sense, the Manor House; the Courts recorded in 1547 and 1548 must have been held in it.

Such was the Burford—a bright and prosperous Burford with its fresh stone buildings, and green with its closes and garden grounds—to which Queen Elizabeth came when she paid the visit recorded with so much satisfaction in the Corporation 'Memorandum Book'. She came, as the record shows, from Langley, being there doubtless on a visit to the old Royal hunting lodge, since she was not at that time on one of her famous Progresses through her Kingdom; and she received the 'purse of gold' (in this case containing twenty Angels) which was the form wherein her subjects were expected to display their gratification at sight of her. It appears that she must have been here again at a later date, though of this we have no local record. In September, 1592, she was making a Progress, and having come from London by way of Newbury, Ramsbury and Cirencester, she

¹ Base of this cross is now within the railing behind *The Tolsey* in *Sheep Street*.

² 'For William Gower groom of the Chamber Grant during pleasure of a tenement or inn called the George in the town of Burford on the Wolde Oxon with the land thereto belonging forfeited by William Brampton to Henry VII and by that King granted in tail mail to John Basket his servant which had died without heir male.' *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII* June 8, 1510.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

was entertained for some days at Sudeley Castle. Thence she went to Woodstock, and so to Oxford. Now Lord Burghley's diary of events of that month includes the following entries:

Sep. 9. The Q. cam to Sudley Castell.

Sep. 14. To Shyrborn, Dottons house. Teynton bre. (*sic*)

Sep. 15. At Burford.

Sep. 16. To Wytney.

Burghley was in attendance on the Queen, and later entries, by the use of the form 'I went' or 'I came', imply that throughout the entries quoted he was in attendance. Moreover, from Sherborne to Woodstock the Queen's way would naturally take her through Burford. A particular point of interest is that the form 'at Burford', taken in conjunction with the sequence of dates, makes it fairly clear that on this occasion the Queen actually stayed for the night.

Burford records of this time show a remarkable number of Welsh names; it well may be that the situation of the place on what was to be the main route from London to South Wales had already brought many Welshmen into business here: Jenkins, Hughes, Griffith, Owen, Williams, are a few of the names that appear.

In this, the most notable period of Burford's civic development, the story of the town shows three outstanding personalities. Foremost among them is Simon Wisdom. We first meet the name in 1530, when in the course of the Bishop of Lincoln's investigations of heresy in his diocese:

'Simon Wisdom of Burford was charged in judgment for having 3 books in English, one was the Gospels in English, another was the Psalter, the third was the summ of Holy Scripture in English.'

He abjured, and no penance or punishment was recorded in the case. In 1538 a Simon Wisdom was collector of the Lay Subsidy for the Hundreds of Bampton and Chadlington; and in the same year the name appears among the Burford Burgesses. There is no earlier trace of the name of Wisdom in Burford, and it would appear likely that Simon came of a family of substance living elsewhere, and settled himself here. He must have lived to a good age, for he was certainly alive in 1581. But there is no need to assume that we have to deal with a father and son of the same name. For if our Simon Wisdom was old enough to become a Burgess and be a Collector in 1538 (and no other name appears later, so that this must be our Simon) he would

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

not be too young to be charged in 1530. The absence of any penance implies the likelihood that it was a case against a quite young man or even a lad. After serving as Steward of the Burgesses he became Alderman and held that office for twenty years, devoting himself to the town. To him we owe the only 'Memorandum Book' Burford possesses, and it is largely written by him. He evidently had a real taste for organization, regulated many rather casual proceedings of the Corporation and, as is said elsewhere, was the most vigorous influence in the founding of the Grammar School. He died about 1585; and it is strange that no memorial, or even tradition of a memorial, remains of so active and public-spirited a man.

One other man at the beginning of the century, and one at the end, deserve to be mentioned for their skill and devotion in bringing the town and the Corporation through the difficult times of the Reformation and the spoliation that accompanied it.

Peter Eynesdale, the first man to bear in our Records the title of Alderman, clearly took much pains to establish on a proper basis the Town Charities and administration in the troublous days of Henry VIII.

Richard Merywether, at the end of the century, was the most prominent of the group which set itself to undo, if possible, the mischief wrought by the ruthless confiscation, and exploiting for private gain, of the Gild property.

Of the spiritual questionings and sufferings of the Reformation Burford appears indeed to have had its full share.¹ The place almost seems to have been one of the centres of Bishop Longland's investigation of heresy in his diocese in 1521. A little company of people, living at Burford, Upton, Standlake, Asthall, and even as far away as West Hendred and from near by Wantage used to meet in Burford houses to listen to the Scriptures in English. John Edmunds and his daughter Agnes, Robert Burges and his wife. John Colins, Richard Colins, his wife and his daughter Joan. John Boyes and his brother (a monk), Edward Red, a schoolmaster, Eleanor Higges, John Through, the brother of Burges's wife, Roger Dods, Thomas Reiley, John Clemson (the Prior's servant), James Edmunds—these were the Burford people accused, and with them were John Harris, of Upton and his wife and their servant Joan Taylor. These seem to

¹ Bitterness of the Marian times it seems to have escaped.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

have met principally in the houses of Edmunds and Harris; and at times men came from Hendred and even from London to speak and read to them. Some of them had books in English which were proscribed, such as a book of the Commandments, the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, and the account that William Thorpe, the Wycliffite, had written of his trial for heresy in 1397. But such books were expensive (a Bible in English would cost some twenty shillings, or in our money £5 or £6), and for the most part they met to hear Alice or Joan Colins repeat from memory the Epistles of Peter or James, the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Works of Mercy, the Five Wits Bodily and Ghostly, the Eight Blessings. Alice Colins, it was said, had a good memory, 'and could recite much of the Scriptures and other good books: and therefore when any Conventicle of these men did meet at Burford commonly she was sent for, to recite unto them.' They communed also of such abstruse matters as the opening of the Book With Seven Seals and other passages of the Apocalypse, and of the first Chapter of St. John's Gospel. As the charges are stated by John Foxe, they sound almost ludicrously petty; the mere knowledge of a text or two of English is sometimes the whole charge, though there are more serious charges of speaking lightly of Sacraments. But of course the charge mentioned by Foxe in any case is only part of the general charge of meeting together in these unauthorized 'conventicles'. Frequent, too, are charges of speaking against the going on pilgrimages: and of this, one of the Burford men has recorded against him a saying not without beauty as we read it today: 'This John Edmunds . . . talking with the said Baker of pilgrimage "bad him go offer his money to the Image of God". When the other asked, What that was? he said, that "the Image of God was the poor people, blind and lame".'

Burford's accused all abjured; and in none of their cases was the extreme penalty exacted. Yet they must have suffered considerably. They appear to have been assigned to different monasteries, where they remained more or less imprisoned, forbidden to leave the monastery precincts. And in the Bishop's letter to one Abbot, committing a 'heretic' to his charge, we can see, between the lines, what the prisoner's life was likely to be—'no lodging need be provided for him except such as he brings with him'—in other words, he must have slept wrapped in his clothes wherever he could lie down: 'and

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

his food is to be such as may be given in alms. If he is capable of any work useful to the monastery, he may be set to it.' Periodically the prisoners were to be sent to certain places for public penance. Burford was one of these places; and there, on a market day and at the market time, they were to move three times round the market cross and stand a quarter of an hour upon the top step of the cross with a faggot of wood on their shoulders. On certain Sundays they were to go in procession with a faggot on the shoulder to Church and kneel on the step before the High Altar throughout the time of High Mass.

We need hardly look for many changes in the town's appearance during the early part of the 1600's; the good stone building would not need replacement or alteration so soon. We may probably attribute to this time the beautiful frontage, with barge-boarded gables, on the East Side of the *High Street* opposite the end of *Sheep Street*. Obviously it was built for a more lavish use of glass in the windows, and wider window openings, than hitherto. Now glass did not become common in Burford at all early; as late as 1608 'the glass in the windows' is separately valued and sold, even in a fairly big house. It is therefore probable that this frontage is not to be dated earlier than the first quarter of the 1600's. It would seem to follow that the gables on either side of *The George* archway are also of this date.

It is unfortunate, for our knowledge of Burford during the 1600's, that so early in the century the Burgesses should have been deprived, by Tanfield's proceedings, of their activities as a Corporation; for that means that no records were made of such a kind as to give us light upon the Town's attitude during the Civil War. Three Burford men appear on the list of loans to the King, but only three; and conclusions may perhaps be drawn from that fact, especially as there were a number of citizens certainly no less wealthy than those three. For the rest we have to rely on information given in national records of the time. From them we gather that Burford saw one sharp skirmish, narrowly missed being the scene of a big battle, and was more or less accustomed for several years to the presence of soldiers.

The skirmish was on New Year's Eve of the year 1643. Sir John Byron was convoying ammunition for the Marquis of Hertford, who was expected at Stow on December 31st. On reaching Burford,

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

Byron sent a reconnoitring party towards Cirencester, where the Parliament had some forces. He found that the number of these forces was small. It may be noted, as a sidelight on the attitude of Burford men, that when Byron had tried to extract information from them about the situation at Cirencester, he could get 'no satisfaction'. That was on Friday, December 30th. Saturday passed quietly, until about 7 o'clock in the evening, when a picket which had been sent out towards Cirencester came back with news that they had seen four dragoons, who, on being observed, rode rapidly away. Byron set a guard at a point which appears, from the description, to have been at the top of the hill west of Burford where the Northleach and Cirencester roads diverge; and also gave orders for a party to advance down the Cirencester road. He was just engaged in hastening the departure of that party, when muskets began to go off from behind. Byron hurried backward, directed by the sound of firing, and found *Witney Street* full of musketeers. He feared that if the Parliament men got possession of the houses about the *Market Cross*, his position would be untenable. So, sending his ammunition convoy over the bridge, to ensure its not being cut off from the Stow road, Byron dashed gallantly into *Witney Street*, and drove the musketeers back to the end of the street, where they took cover in the *White Hart Inn*. Here, at the door, Byron received a wound in the face from a halberd. He rode back for more men and in a second approach to the inn one of his troopers was killed. But the Parliamentarians were already withdrawing through a back door, and this skirmish in the dark was over. One man was buried next day, and six others (the losses on the Parliamentary side are put down at that number) on January 2nd. The entries in the Parish Register are our only local record of the matter. These entries agree with the accounts of the affair; it is noticeable that the one man buried on January 1st has his name entered, while the others are noted merely as 'sixe soldiers'. Byron's force, remaining in possession, would be able to give the name of their man; but the dead left by the other side would be unidentified. It is not difficult to see how the fight occurred. Byron and his officers were watching the Cirencester road, and meanwhile the four troopers who had been observed, riding back to their main body, were able to divert it across country and get down into the town from the opposite side—in fact, Byron narrowly escaped being badly taken

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

in the rear. Some entries in the Register, close to those quoted, suggest that there were also a few deaths from wounds; one Thomas Tunkes 'slaine with shot of musket' was buried on January 10th; and William Bolton 'slaine in like manner' on the 15th; a soldier who 'died of sickness' was buried on the 8th.

In September of that year—1643—some of Essex's men were quartered in Burford; a subaltern notes of the place that, as quarters, 'it is very poor, for many of our soldiers can get neither beds, bread nor water, which makes them grow very strong, for backbiters have been seen to march upon some of them six on breast and eight deep at their open order'.

In 1644 the town was for a moment in the line of a critical strategic movement—the famous night march of Charles I out of Oxford, to escape encirclement by Essex and Waller. Charles's march, most successfully directed, brought him to Burford in the afternoon, and he and his troops rested there till 9 o'clock at night, when they moved on to Bourton-on-the-Water. Waller was the first to discover that Charles had slipped through, and sent troops after him, who were in time to catch a few stragglers in Burford; Essex, coming up later, decided to pursue no further, but held a council of war in the town. A fortnight after, the situation having changed, Charles was back in Burford on his way to Oxford again, and this time he stayed the night at *The George*, and went to Church next day to hear a sermon, before resuming his journey by way of *Witney*. Possibly another entry in the Register for 1644—'William Callis of ffilkins a wounded man and lyeing under the chirurgeons hand at Burford dyed and buried ye 4th of July'—may be a relic of one of these events.

An entry in that year—'Thomas Williams a Trooper slaine by his fellow soldier with shott of a pistoll and buried the 24the day of November'—and again another—'Lewis Davies a serjeant of a foote company under General Gerrard dyed of a wound given him by a Captaine and was buried ye 29th of November'—are evidently connected with one of Prince Rupert's marches. Rupert was joined in Burford by General Gerrard on November 1st, 1644. Troops were here again early in the following year: 'John Hethwood a soldier belonging to Sr Marmaduke Langdale dyed of hurt received from a fellow soldier and was Buried ye 30th of ffebruar.' Again in May

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

there are two more entries: 'George Rowley an officer in Prince Rupert his Army dyeing of a wound received was buried ye eight of May'—'John Bullocke a Farrier in the Lord Goreings army shott by his fellow soldier buried eodem die.' In September Rupert came again, on the 14th, a Sunday; the Journal of his marches records: 'Our convoe left us. Layd down armes.' But it was not till the 17th, at Oxford, that the formal end was put to Rupert's command.

Of greater interest than these passing contacts with the war is the fact that Burford witnessed the handling of the Leveller movement by Fairfax and Cromwell in 1649. The men concerned repudiated the name of Levellers; but the accounts they themselves give of their Movement reveal clearly their devotion to Lilburne and Harrison. The discontent in the ranks and the suspicions of the 'tyranny' of Cromwell and the Parliament, which led to the 'Solemn Engagement' of the troops on Newmarket Heath in 1647, had blazed up afresh in May 1649, upon certain regiments being warned for service in Ireland. There seems to have been an impression—perhaps not unfounded—that this service was deliberately intended to break up the centres of disaffection. It was indeed given out officially that no man would be forced to go to Ireland; any who wished might take their discharge. But this brought out another standing grievance—that men were discharged with only a very small amount of their overdue pay in cash and the remainder in the form of a paper certifying that so much pay was due—paper which, to meet immediate needs, the soldiers were obliged to sell while they were convinced that the Parliament, to save expenditure, was actually employing agents to buy up this paper at 3s. or 4s. in the £.

The discontent in certain regiments came to a head at Salisbury. Colonel Scrope's regiment and Commissary General Ireton's were under orders for Ireland. The two made common cause, and a small thing brought about the climax. Colonel Scrope, after various attempts to placate the men, had the horse lines placed two miles from the quarters, no doubt to secure that the men should not be able to slip away too easily. The troops took this as a sinister sign, refused orders, chose their own officers, and marched off in company with Ireton's men, by way of Marlborough to Wantage. Fairfax, having word of this, sent four officers to the mutineers to negotiate with them. It is not quite clear from the various accounts (there is

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

extant an account by Major White one of these officers, as well as another by some of the mutineers) why the negotiations failed. The mutineers say that Major White assured them that Fairfax was not pursuing them in force; Major White himself states that Cromwell had bidden him give a message to that effect; they appear, in consequence, to have believed that they were free to carry out their plans, the most immediate of which was to effect a junction with another body of disaffected troops—Colonel Harrison's regiment—which they hoped to meet at Abingdon. They did in fact meet two troops of the regiment, but the latter, while professing friendliness, said that their intention was to march to Thame, and that they would send an answer later. However, as the mutineers were leaving the field where the meeting had taken place, they perceived a party of horse which they knew to belong to a regiment—Reynold's—which had stood out of the Movement. The two troops of Harrison's regiment thereupon marched with the mutineers upon this party, and it retreated towards Newbridge, with the obvious intention of preventing the mutineers from crossing the Thames. There had been serious disaffection among troops at Banbury, and the troops from Salisbury would naturally be moving in that direction. There was no fighting at Newbridge. The mutineers' version is that they did not desire bloodshed, and that they therefore withdrew a mile upstream and swam their horses over. Having crossed the river they appointed three of their officers to settle upon quarters for them, and the officers decided to march them to Burford.

Major White and the other emissaries from Fairfax were with the mutineers all this time, and discussions were taking place as to the answer that was to be sent to Fairfax. Even the appearance of Reynolds's men had not apparently caused in the minds of the mutineers any apprehension that Fairfax himself might be on the move. They quartered themselves in Burford in all security, and were horribly surprised when, some three hours later, troops poured into the town from both sides (along *Witney Street* and *Sheep Street*, that is). After a few ineffectual shots the mutineers were overpowered.

Those of them who afterwards published their account of the affair believed that they had been betrayed throughout. They assert that the officers whom Fairfax had sent to them had left word of their movements at every place they passed; that Cornet Dean, or Den,

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

whom they regarded as one of their leaders, had played the traitor consistently, and had deliberately left the guard, which he had set that night in Burford, without proper orders; and that the 'quarter-master' whom he placed in charge of the guard had forthwith posted off and brought Fairfax's forces into the town. Major White, on the other hand, asserts that there was no treachery of which he was conscious; he was, at the very moment of attack, writing a reply to Fairfax which had been drafted by him in consultation with the mutineers; and when the attack came he rushed out in his slippers in an endeavour to stop it, and only returned into the town under the pistol of one of Fairfax's troopers. This occurred on the night of Sunday, May 13th, 1649.

Imprisoned for that and three succeeding nights in the Church, the mutineers had time to reflect, and they composed a petition to Fairfax confessing that they had been in fault and throwing themselves upon his mercy. A good many of them believed that they had secured their lives by surrendering, and that it was by Cromwell's insistence, against Fairfax's inclinations, that they did not all escape scot free. However that may be, the following Thursday morning saw four of them condemned to death—Cornet Dean, Cornet Thompson (brother of the most active of the disaffected men at Banbury) and two men named Church and Perkins. Thompson (saying that he confessed the justice of his sentence), Church and Perkins heroically calm in their cause, were shot in the churchyard in the presence of their fellows: Dean was reprieved at the last minute, and said, weeping bitterly, 'I am not worthy of such a mercy; I am more ashamed to live than afraid to die'. This reprieve played, not unnaturally, a large part in the suspicion with which his fellows afterwards regarded him; in fact they came to believe that the condemnation and reprieve were a mere blind to cover the fact that he had all along been an emissary of Cromwell in disguise. He was made to preach to the men in Church after the execution, which he did, 'howling and weeping like a Crocodile'. Cromwell had already spoken to them—'his old manner of dissembling speeches', says the mutineers' account, not denying 'that many of the things we desired were good, and they intended to have many of them done, but we went in a mutinous way, and disobeyed the General's orders'.

We can, perhaps, at this distance of time disentangle to some

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

extent the truth behind the Levellers' assertion that they were caught by treachery. It may well have been that Fairfax, in sending the message by Major White that he was not following in force, assumed that the mutineers would make no further move until they had replied to him. It would be quite natural that, if he received word that they were, on the contrary, moving to a junction with other troops from another quarter, he should feel that swift action was necessary. And on that assumption it would be equally natural if some of the officers he had sent, did, as the mutineers say, leave word of their movements at places they passed. On the other side, the mutineers, upset as they clearly were by the sudden forcing to a head of their disaffection, going back, as they perpetually do in their account, with a curious obstinacy to their 'Solemn Engagement' of 1647, and full of their own wrongs, plainly were under the impression that it was to be a matter of negotiation between them and Fairfax. It is easy to see in their words the mixture of the nervousness of men who knew that they were in mutiny and the assurance of men who fancied that they had time to strengthen their defence. But it is a little unfortunate to find that one of the prominent signatories of the rather abject petition from *Burford Church* was, later on, one of the signatories of the pamphlet defending all they had done. Cornet Dean, too, was causing trouble to the Parliamentary Commissioners of Excise four months later. Even the 'Crocodile's' tears had soon dried; he became a preacher in the county of Huntingdon and specially connected with a congregation at Fenstanton.

Two lines in the Church Registers are (except the name cut on the font) the only local record we have of these happenings; but from the fact that these are not in the ordinary course of Register entries but are in the top margin of one of the pages, we may perhaps glean that Vicar Christopher Glynn was uncertain what attitude he should assume. His entry is non-committal; it reads 'three soldiers shot to death in Burford churchyard buried May 17th'; and only some time afterwards, when there was no room to make the entry in its proper place, did he record the burials.

The latter part of the 1600's in Burford was a time of considerable rebuilding. The front of *The Vicarage* towards the *High Street* bears the date 1672; a house in *Sheep Street* is marked 1696; and with these belongs *Kit's Quarry* house, built by Christopher Kempster in 1698.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

From these we can date *The Rectory*—one of the most beautiful buildings in Burford. These houses have stone fronts of more carefully worked ashlar than the earlier houses had, extremely well fitted and pointed; the window openings are plain with a broad shallow moulding and are tall in proportion to their width—designed distinctly for sash windows. The whole effect is of a smoother, more refined style, with a tendency to rectangular outline. Two houses almost opposite *The Vicarage*, obviously built at one time and included under one roof-line, display these characteristics, and so does a house higher up the street on the same side, a little above the *Wesleyan Chapel*. To this period also may be attributed the building on the south side of *Witney Street*, which has come to be called *The Great House*. It has the same kind of window opening, varied with pleasing circles in the attic storey and ovals in the cellar; and the same good ashlar work. This is the building which first appears on the Burgage Rent Roll of 1685 as ‘a new tenement on the south side of *Witney Street* in the possession of Mr. Robert Glyn’. There is reason, too, for classing among our late Jacobean buildings the present frontage of *The Bull*. This is the single instance in Burford architecture of any considerable use of brick. Striking it is today, and probably to be striking was its purpose from the first. The currents of road traffic and road travellers, which were later to provide Burford’s chief business, had begun; and probably this led to a project of rebuilding *The Bull*, in some new fashion, in hope that it might come to rival the, then supreme, *George*.

Much of this building activity, of the Restoration period, is attributable to a fresh element in the population. It appears on the Burgage Rent Rolls of the time with a distinguishing mark. A certain number of chief tenants are entered with the title ‘Mr.’. A new class is thus seen in the town, between the few entitled to rank as ‘Esquire’ like the Lenthalls and the Duttons on the one hand and the Burgess families on the other. Some of the townsfolk we can indeed watch in their progression; we find references such as ‘William Webbe the younger of Clifford’s Inn, London, gentleman, son of William Webbe, of Burford, yeoman’, and ‘William Hunt, of New College, in the University of Oxford, gentleman, son of John Hunt, of Burford, mercer’. Yet the ‘Mr.’ in the documents at this time is never applied to the Burgesses, or even the most opulent of the towns-

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

people, such as the Bartholomews or the Silvesters. The men of the new group were clearly men of leisure, not necessarily rich, but unshackled to trade. The mild sophistication of life which this freshly risen class was producing in England everywhere at this date may well have been quickened in Burford by the fact that our town's situation on routes of travel was again and anew to become a feature in its development. The ridge above the town lies along the shortest practicable route from Oxford to Cheltenham, on the way to Gloucester and the Severn crossing into Wales. The frequent occurrence of Welsh names in Burford records of the 1500's shows that this road must then have been in considerable use. It was not yet, however, of first-rate importance; for direct traffic from London to Gloucester followed a line south of the Thames, crossing the river at Lechlade. But at this period, before the development of through coaching systems, wide difference between a coach road and a posting road did not obtain. The posting system was all that had been organized so far; and Burford possessed a 'postmaster' in 1685. (The town's main activity as a posting station at that early date belonged, not to the Oxford-Cheltenham-Gloucester route, which later was the artery of its life, but to its situation on the main road to Stow-on-the-Wold—a junction line between southern and midland through routes.) At this time, the normal way from Oxford to Burford was not through Botley and Eynsham to Witney; it took the less direct course by Bladon, Long Handborough and the northern side of Eynsham Park. That was the road followed by Charles I on his march out of Oxford, and he hardly would have taken it unless it had been the best road; because the Eynsham road would have kept him further away from Essex at Bletchington while bringing him very little nearer to Waller at Newbridge. Also Charles II, returning from the races at Burford, stopped for hawking at Campsfield which is on the road between Oxford and Bladon.

By some accident the races have bulked beyond their deserts in popular notions of Burford of the 1600's, probably because in 1680-81 they came into 'London news' on account of the King's Plate being, for that year, transferred here, from Newmarket. On that occasion Charles II came over from Oxford, being received by the Bailiffs and Burgesses and conducted by them to dine at *The Priory* before viewing the races of March 17th on 'the large plain adjoining'.

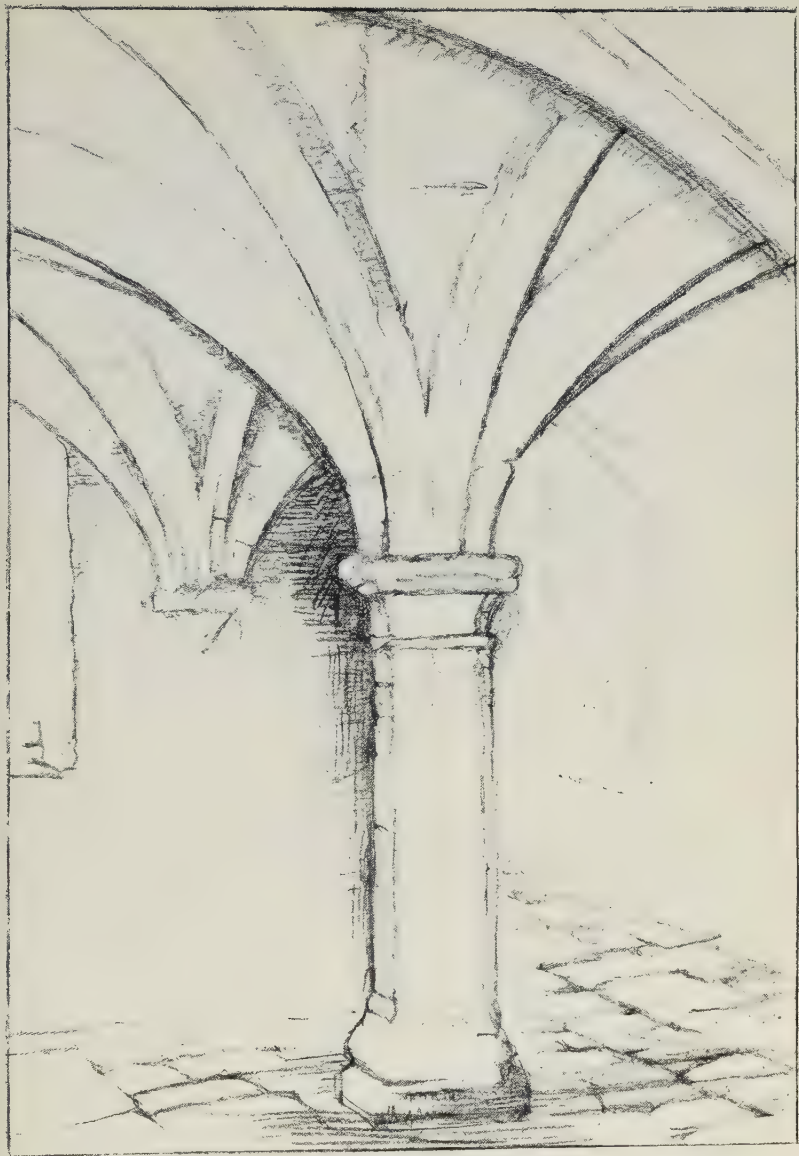
GROWTH OF THE TOWN

It is curious that though the last Burford horse race took place less than a hundred and fifty years ago, no certainty as to the position of the Course now exists. Assertions as to it are loud; but they are completely contradictory. Remains of a Grand Stand and stables are to be seen on this side of Aldsworth.

At this time Burford traders and shopkeepers were prosperous—the tanner, George Symons, moved into *Cob Hall*, Leonard Mills enlarged his house in *Sheep Street*. Respecting shops—their design—I have lately come upon proof that they remained in 1689 structurally what they had been in the 1400's—penthouses jutting about seven feet into the roadway; for in the Burford Constables' 1687-88 'Presentment' I find—'We return Richard Muncke the older of Burford . . . for forestalling his neighbours by setting up a penthouse above nine feet in the street under which he setteth out to doors the one above five foot Broad and the other fower fort into the street to the hindrance of his neighbours.'¹

The Burford industry of this period, noted specially by Plot, is malting and inns appear in the records of this time in astonishing numbers. Besides *The George*, *Bull*, *Bear*, *Angel* and *Crown*, we find *The Greyhound* (then at the corner of what is now *Swan Lane*); *The Swan* (which occupied *Cob Hall* between *The Vicarage* and the river); *The King's Arms*, *The Mermaid*, *The Three Goats Heads*, *The Blackamoor's Head*, *The Three Cups*, *The Black Boy*, and *The Talbot*. Burford saddlers had now a great reputation, and in 1663 three saddles were presented to Charles II and the Duke of York; in 1660 Charles was given another which Anthony Wood speaks of as a handsomer present than the one Oxford had just made to the King. In 1695 two saddles were given to William III, which he immediately ordered to be kept for his personal use. At this date—the end of the 1600's—a physician and an apothecary were living in the place and, remarkably, Burford possessed a book shop. To this period belong the series of 'Tokens' issued by Burford tradesmen. One is a token, apparently in general use in the town, inscribed 'A Burford Token' and dated 1669 with the town arms on the reverse; others were issued by Thomas Mathewes who kept *The Bear*; Leonard Mills the waggoner of *Sheep Street*; John Sindry a grocer; John

¹ *Oxfordshire Justices of the Peace in the Seventeenth Century* by Mary Sturge Gretton, Appendix page 49.



CELLAR UNDER BICYCLE SHOP IN HIGH STREET



THE TOLSEY (EARLY 1500'S), THEN MERELY THE UPPER STOREY ON PILLARS

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

Payton a clothier who also kept *The Talbot* an inn in *Witney Street* about where *The Mason's Arms* is now, (possibly there were two John Paytons); Richard Veysey landlord of *The George*; Charles Yate.¹

The mark of the 1700's we find in the flat frontages, rising to straight parapets. The best specimen is the long façade of a house with five tall windows, facing *The Tolsey* across the *High Street*; and, on either side of *High Street*, lower down, *Warwick House* and what until recently was *Foster's Post Office*; and a small house immediately above the *Wesleyan Chapel*. Such frontages were principally due, no doubt, to the desire for larger window-openings as glass became cheaper, with also some tendency, as tradesmen grew richer, to emulate the style of *The Rectory* or *The Great House*.

Wealth was coming into Burford now from a source that was for more than a century to bring it prosperity. In 1761 a coach had begun to run, *by way of Witney*, from Burford to London. This enterprise was undertaken by a Thomas Castell of Burford, and it opened what was to be a much used route. Probably better methods of road-making and better field drainage had made serviceable all the year round the low-lying stretch between Eynsham and Oxford. And utilizing this was all that had been needed to bring Gloucester, South Wales and Hereford coaches down from London by way of the Chilterns, Oxford, Burford and Cheltenham, instead of by the roads south of the Thames. Burford's share, too, in this new traffic was even greater than may be evident today; for the High Road today passes the town at the summit of the hill—the hill above *High Street*; but for the greater part of the coaching period there was only a farm track where this high road now is. Then, the main road, immediately it entered the Parish of Burford, forsook the ridge and turned down *White Hill*, coming into the town along *Witney Street*. Also it—the main road—went out of the town again through *Sheep Street*, turning down at *The Lamb Inn* through *The Priory* wood towards the river, to rise steeply, from the end of that wood, to the top of the hill and the Cirencester road again. For long, even after Palmer's reform of the coaching system and the great speeding-up occasioned by that,

¹ To the above list three more are added in *The Catalogue of Oxfordshire 17th Century Tokens* edited by Dr. J. G. Milne. Also there is a possible fourth included in the headmaster of Burford Council School's collection of Burford Tokens.

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

all the coaches continued to come into, and leave, the town in this wriggling way. And 'all the coaches' coming through Burford at this date was an amazing number. No fewer than forty main coaches passed through in each twenty-four hours. About 9.30 in the morning 'The Magnet' from Cheltenham would arrive, on its way to Oxford, and just behind it came 'The Berkeley Hunt'—a green coach—working the same route. At 11 'The Regulator' from Gloucester would rattle in, and with it, or on its heels, 'The Retaliator', also from Gloucester. At 1 o'clock 'The Mazeppa' from Hereford, and its rival on the same road 'The Rapid' would appear; and soon after they had gone down 'Magnet' and the down 'Berkeley Hunt' would be roaring up the narrow end of *Witney Street*. Later in the afternoon the down 'Regulator', 'Retaliator', 'Mazeppa' and 'Rapid' were due, and by 7 o'clock the first of the night coaches, 'The Champion' from Hereford, came through, followed about 10.30 by 'The Paul Pry' from Aberystwith. At 12.30 the down 'Champion', and, soon after, the down 'Paul Pry', would be waking the night. Last of all, in the small hours, came the 'Gloucester Royal Mail'—the up coach at 1.30 a.m. and the down at 4.30 a.m. Thus, without counting the less important coaches and those working shorter distances, eighteen of the through 'fliers' were seen in Burford every day. The rows of hooks still visible in the beams under the archways of *The George* and *The Bull* must always then have been laden with game and joints, and the yards can never have known an hour of silence.

Meanwhile, the last of the great changes took place converting the aspect of Burford of the 1600's and early 1700's to the aspect of Burford as we know it. Enclosure of the old common arable lands swept away open fields and substituted the walled fields and pastures of the modern landscape. The *Upton Fields* were enclosed in 1773, and the *Burford Fields* in 1795. These dates were early for Enclosure, but reasons for their earliness are clear. Of the eleven hundred acres of *Burford Fields* only about three hundred went to independent farmers. John Lenthall and the Impropiator of the Rectorial tithes received all the rest, only two farms appear that were not on tenancy from these. Small farmers working their own land about Burford had almost disappeared. New sources of prosperity had drawn the yeoman families of the 1500's back into the town; they had willingly

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

parted with their lands when Tanfield and the Lenthalls were putting together their estates and they had thus made way for the race of tenant farmers.

Early in the 1800's John Lenthall diverted the coach road, going westward out of Burford as already described, from its passage through *The Priory* wood thus allowing the coaches a straighter run, by *Kit's Quarry* house, upward to the Cirencester road. Also in 1812 the making into a road of what previously had been the mere track, along the top between the *White Hill* turning and this road, enabled the coaches to keep to the ridge without coming into, and through, Burford at all. To meet this change an inn called *The Bird-in-hand* was erected at the top of Burford High Street hill, and another—*The Ramping Cat*—at the top of *White Hill*. But the cataclysm to Burford's prosperity that was really impending no building of hostelrys in changed road positions could avert. Railways were about to ruin all road traffic; for the necessities of railway construction were approaching land configurations in ways opposed to all earlier considerations. Railroads required, not the dryness and firmness of ground needful for horses, but the most moderate gradients and the passage most nearly level. For them, the Cotswolds could not be the most practicable route to Gloucester and South Wales, and the Windrush Valley lay just too far west to serve for the Worcester-Hereford line.

CHAPTER IV¹

THE CHURCH

A Church must have existed in Burford from early times; but of an Anglo-Saxon or early Norman structure nothing now remains, unless a fragment is to be seen in the doorway, within the Church, leading to the tower steps.

The outline of the history of the present building would seem to be as follows:

(i) A Church, consisting of nave, tower and short chancel, was built towards the close of the 1100's. Of this building there remain the west wall and west door, and the tower. One other fragment may be seen, built into the north wall of the Tanfield Chapel; and in the room over the porch there are two stones which have formed part of a Norman doorway, perhaps the south door of the original Church.

(ii) In the 1200's the chancel was lengthened, arches were opened in the north and south walls of the tower, and the transepts were built. A south aisle must also have been erected.

(iii) A hundred years later the chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury was built west of the south transept, with a crypt beneath. The font is of this date.

(iv) Towards the close of the 1300's a great work of reconstruction began. It may be said that for a hundred and twenty years work of building or decoration was going on in the Church; and at the close of this period the Church had reached the size and shape which we now see. A sacristy (in which the original altar still exists) was built to the north of the Sanctuary, a new nave with north and south aisles was erected, the tower was raised and a spire added, and the beautiful porch arose. Then, however, the Norman tower showed signs of weakness under the additional weight that had been put upon it. In order to save it, reinforcing work had to be done, the nature of which is fully evident today. The north and south arches opening from the

¹ For much of this chapter we, my late husband and I, were indebted to Canon William C. Emeris, Vicar of Burford.

THE CHURCH

tower space into the transepts were partially filled up, lower and narrower arches appearing under the original ones; the north transept was shortened and strengthened with thrusts and buttresses, and the north wall of the chancel was widened and so arranged as to form a support; several of the small arches within the tower above the main arches were blocked up. The slightly distorted curve of these main arches and certain signs of old cracks in the walls above remain to show what danger the tower had been in. At about the same time as this building was going on, the north wall of the north transept was prolonged eastwards to form a chapel north of the chancel. Later a south chancel was built, and a new east window inserted in the chancel.

(v) There remains to mention one other feature of the Church, which was not always an integral part of the structure. In the 1200's the Gild Merchant of Burford built a chapel, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the churchyard, close to the south-west corner of the Church, but detached from it. The separate position of the chapel is evident in one document of the Burford Records—a conveyance of property by one William More, of Henley-on-Thames, to Thomas Spicer, with certain remainders to the Church of Burford. Remainder to the Gild chapel is also included, and it is described as '*capella beate marie in eodem cimeterio que est burgi*'. This specific description of the chapel as 'in the churchyard' proves that it was not at that date (1422) a part of the Church. In the 1400's this chapel was lengthened towards the east, so as to reach the great south porch; it was shortened at the west end, and was opened to the south aisle by an arcade. On its enlargement it was re-dedicated as the Great Chapel of St. Mary and St. Anne. As it stands the chapel bears signs of its two distinct stages of existence. The south door, now blocked, with a defaced crucifix above it, and the windows and blocked doorway in the north wall, are relics of the original Gild chapel. It is just possible that the remains of the window to be seen at the junction of the north wall with the west wall of the main building, at a lower level and of somewhat later date than the other windows in the north wall, may mark for us, if it was a kind of low side window, the position of the altar in the original chapel.

The extension of the chapel into the Church fabric coincides interestingly with the period at which the Gild of Burford was rising

THE CHURCH

to importance, and was assuming authority over various Church funds. It is interesting also in another way, because the detached position of the first chapel has produced a curious irregularity in the ground plan of the Church. The two buildings were not oriented on parallel axes, with the result that the Gild chapel, when lengthened eastwards, entered the main building at a distinct slant.

Of the original arrangements within the Church and of the decoration which adorned it some idea can be formed from hints which the building itself supplies, and from documents which have survived. We see the blocked doorway which led out upon the Rood loft, and this marks the position of the Great Rood at the western tower arch, and doubtless of some form of screen beneath it. There are clear traces of another screen under the eastern tower arch. Probably the altar in St. Peter's chapel was connected with the Rood screen. The present dedication is modern. Of the general structure of this chapel, which is such an unusual and interesting feature of the Church, it is impossible to speak with certainty. The stone canopy must undoubtedly have belonged to a mediaeval altar; it was at one time thought that the woodwork was erected by Sir Lawrence Tanfield to form a Priory pew, a use which the canopied enclosure served for some two centuries. In support of this view it is pointed out that the woodwork does not fit on properly to the stone canopy, and conceals some remains of decoration on the upper face of the stonework. However, the opinion of architectural experts tends more and more to the belief that the wooden canopy, though clearly added at a later date than the stonework, is an authentic part of the original chapel. The screens dividing the north and south chancel chapels from the chancel are original; but that dividing the Tanfield chapel from the north transept is a medley of mediaeval and Jacobean work; it was placed there by Lady Tanfield. The screen of St. Thomas's chapel is mainly original, and still preserves much of its colouring. About the beginning of the 1700's, this chapel was reserved for the attendance of members of the Corporation at divine service, and called the Burgesses' Aisle; portions of the screen have been cut out, apparently for their convenience, and fresh pieces have had to be inserted. The pulpit also is original mediaeval work, but in this case the colour has been revived. Of the colour decoration of the walls traces are to be found in the south transept and in St. Thomas's

THE CHURCH

chapel, and in the Tanfield chapel there is a very interesting recess in which the decoration still lingers. Patches of colour on the stonework in the nave suggest how much was lost through the disastrous removal of the plaster in the early stages of the restoration in the 1800's; and we know from other evidence that there was a figure of St. Christopher on the wall near the pulpit.

Wills of Burford citizens give us some valuable information about the structure of the mediaeval Church. Thus the will of John Pynnok (1486) enables us to identify the south chancel chapel (now the choir vestry) as the chapel of the Holy Trinity; it was built at Pynnok's expense, and he was buried in it. In view of this, the north chancel chapel, in which the Tanfield monument stands, may almost certainly be identified as the chapel of St. Katherine. Henry Bisshope, the founder of the *Almsbouse*, made special bequests to this chapel, including vestments for celebrating Mass particularly at its altar. Hence it is likely that one of the stones in this chapel, from which the brasses have been stripped, is upon his tomb. The other is probably the tomb of John Busbye, a very rich Burford merchant of the early 1500's. We learn also from wills that there was a crucifix in the churchyard; and an altar of St. Anne, as well as of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the Lady chapel. The high altar was, of course, the altar of St. John the Baptist. Besides these five altars, and that of St. Thomas of Canterbury, there were lights, if not altars, to St. Stephen, St. Clement, St. Roch, All Souls, Holy Cross; and a light 'called Sidelight', and a light 'called Torchlight'.

Of ancient glass such fragments as survive are to be seen in the upper lights of the east and west windows, and in the north window of the north transept. Some few pieces in the west window are *in situ*. The figures and angels would seem to have come from tracery lights. Among the figures the following Saints have been identified—the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Barbara, St. Margaret, St. Mary Magdalen, a female Saint holding a book in her left hand, perhaps St. Katherine, and St. George piercing the dragon with a spear held in both hands and wearing armour of *circa* 1480. It would appear that the angels belonged to a series representing the Nine Orders; they may have been in the clerestory windows in the nave, and the female Saints in the windows of the Lady chapel. Of a set of symbols of the Evangelists that of St. Luke is in the west window and that of St.

THE CHURCH

Matthew in the east. Some small letters of an inscription in the west window read 'How a manne mā wedde', and suggest that there was also a series representing the Seven Sacraments. Other fragments give interesting types of canopies, and parts of a figure of an Archbishop, fully vested with the pallium, perhaps St. Thomas of Canterbury. In the east window there are rounds with the Jesus and the Mary monograms, *in situ*. We see also St. Christopher, and two angels of the Annunciation. At the top of one light is a head of a character of the 1300's, but all the other fragments are of the 1400's. However, in the cusped head of one of the central lights there is the merchant's mark of some donor (inverted), and it corresponds exactly with the mark used by Simon Wisdom on his seal. As is stated elsewhere, there is no evidence of any one of this name, or of the name of Wisdom at all, in any of the Burford Records, before the well-known Simon Wisdom who figures so largely in the town's history. As he was living till about 1582 or 1583, he can hardly have been concerned in the erection of windows of the 1400's; and this fragment must almost certainly have come from some later window given by him. The collection and placing of the fragments in the east and west windows was done in 1826. When the lower lights of the west window were filled with modern glass in 1874, one head under a canopy was removed, and this is now in the north window of the north transept; it represents St. James of Compostella, with a cockle shell on his hat. Other fragments found in the Church have been placed in the middle of this window. The piece bearing the arms of St. Edward the Confessor and the glass in the tracery lights were given to the Church in 1911.

Of the monuments in the Church the oldest, and the only one which preserves the memory of a mediaeval citizen of Burford, is the beautiful bracket brass beneath the Rood, from which John Spicer, with his wife Alys, still speak to us. It is worth particular notice, as a specimen of a type of monumental brass rather rare in this country—the type in which the persons commemorated appear kneeling at the foot of a pedestal carrying a canopy enshrining a representation of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin or some saint—in this case the Blessed Virgin, though that part of the brass has been destroyed. John Spicer died in 1427, and the Rood beneath which his body was laid had been his gift to the Church, together with one of the windows:—

THE CHURCH

*The wiche rode soler in this chirche
Upon my cost I dede do wirge
Wt a lamp birnyng bright
To worschip god both day & nyght
And a gabul wyndow dede do make
In helth of soule and for Crist sake.*

This window we can perhaps identify by connecting it with the question of the dedication of St. Thomas's chapel, which is of particular interest, because St. Thomas of Canterbury is not a saint much commemorated in the Churches of this part of England. It would seem likely that the chapel was given by someone who had a peculiar attachment to the saint. Now the document concerning Thomas Spicer, which has already been referred to in connection with the Lady Chapel, makes very special provision for the upkeep of 'the light which is before the altar of the said Thomas Spycer in the parish church'; that light is to take precedence of every other purpose in the ultimate disposal of the money. In view of this fact, and in view also of the curiously personal description of the altar, it is evident that 'the altar of Thomas Spycer' was in some rather unusual way connected with his name. Thus it is at least permissible to conjecture that he may have built the chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury, as to his name-Saint. If so, perhaps John Spicer's gable window is the one in this chapel and is his contribution to his relative's work.

Another mediaeval citizen, and obviously a greater than John Spicer, has left the fine decorated altar-tomb in the south transept; but by no conjecture has he yet been identified. The tomb, which originally bore another bracket brass, has been despoiled of every scrap of metal, except one small fragment of the inscription round the edge, bearing the name 'Willelmus'. Sir Richard Lee, the Herald who visited and made notes in most of the Churches of Oxfordshire in 1574, records 'a fair tomb of marble', which must almost certainly be this one. Even at that date it had been 'defaced', but it had not been quite completely stripped, for coats of arms were on it. They were: (i) Gules a lion rampant guardant or, impaling a merchant's mark; (ii) argent three stumps of trees eradicated sable, impaling argent a maunch sable; (iii) quarterly, first and fourth argent three

THE CHURCH

stumps of trees coupéd and eradicated sable, second and third argent a maunch sable. These latter coats convey to us that the family of the person whom the tomb commemorates had married into the Hastings family (the Hastings maunch, or sleeve, is a well-known charge) of which there was a branch at Yelford as well as the main stem at Daylesford. The first of the coats, too, is clear indication that the man buried here was a Burford merchant. But beyond this the facts do not enable us to go. The tomb has been popularly associated with the family of John Leggere, because he 'decorated' the window of this transept (as an inscription in a rather unusual place, in the outside moulding of the window, informs us) for the welfare of the souls of his father and mother. Leggere was a Burford man, who appears in the Records once as a feoffee of the Church Lands in 1487, and later as the founder of an obit. But there is nothing to suggest that he would have been of such position as to erect so elaborate a monument, and it is, moreover, unlikely that, if he did, his petition for prayers for the souls of his parents would have appeared on the outside of the window; he would have placed it on the tomb, if the William buried there were his father.

The monuments of the 1500's are not such as to add beauty to the Church. There are none belonging to the first half of the century, the earliest being the Harman monument of 1569, which is dull and uninspired in workmanship. The most curious feature of it is the introduction of figures of Red Indians. The other tombs of this century are all of one type, and it is a type which can hardly be called beautiful. It may be described as a half-altar tomb placed against the wall, decorated in front with strap-work and panels for inscription, and with a rising back-piece carved with detached devices—merchant's marks, stars or starfish, etc. These tombs begin with that of Edmund Sylvester, who died in 1568, and most of them are tombs of that family. One, in the south chancel chapel, commemorating Richard Rainoldes, who was Bailiff at the time of Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1574, bears the moving words: 'I go to sleepe before you & wee shall wake together'.

To the 1600's belong a brass of 1624 in the Lady chapel to John Osbaldeston and his wife—a branch of this Chadlington family had some property here—monuments to Richard Sindrey and John Warren, which show better craftsmanship in stone, and come from

THE CHURCH

the same hand as the great mantelpiece at the Priory; and the Bartholomew monuments in the south chancel chapel, notable for their good lettering (which is a redeeming feature of some of the later Sylvester monuments). Two brasses of this period which still remain on tombs in the churchyard may also be mentioned; one to John Hunt, mercer, of 1608, and one of 1651 to Elizabeth White, who 'willingly and peaceably exchanged her vile enjoyments here for those rich, precious and unspeakable'. The half-length figure monument of John Harris, 1674, in painted stone, good of its kind, is the Burford Burgesses' acknowledgment of his generous bequest to the charities of the town where he was born. Good lettering again distinguishes the stone in the south transept to the memory of the murdered John Pryor; but it is with difficulty that we decipher the inscription over the sacristy door to 'Mr. Nathaniel Brooks, Gent. a truly honest man' (1695). The principal monument, however, of this century is of course the ornate erection by the 'noble and verteous lady' Tanfield to her most honoured husband 'in memory of his vertues and her sorrows'. It is a good example of its kind; for while parts of the canopy decoration, such as the cherubs' heads and carved bosses, have a rather stuck-on appearance, the modelling of the symbolical figures placed on the capitals of the pillars is fine and delicate, and the carving of the recumbent effigies is full of character. The introduction of the small figures kneeling at the heads and feet of the effigies—the Tanfields' daughter who married the first Lord Falkland, and their grandson, the famous Falkland—adds much charm to the erection. It may perhaps be noted that the long Latin inscription at the foot of the monument, though rather obscure in meaning, seems to betray some disappointment on Lady Tanfield's part that her husband had not been interred in a more notable spot—Westminster Abbey, we may presume. It used to be thought that this monument was the work of Nicholas Stone; but it is now known definitely that he did not design it.

It is interesting, after this view of the existing monuments, to refer to the accounts of the Church given first by Sir Richard Lee in 1574, and secondly by an heraldic visitor in 1660. They show, for one thing, how comparatively little we have lost since the 1500's. Sir Richard Lee is chiefly concerned with coats of arms in the glass of the windows and on escutcheons in the stonework of the building.

THE CHURCH

But he mentions, as we have seen, the tomb in the south transept; and he also describes the Harman monument. The only other tomb he enters on his notes is lost: 'On a graveston Pynnok as before¹ impaling a lion rampant guardant (untinctured). Over it written John Pynnok marcator and Elein his wife mccccclxxiv.' Another lost Pynnok monument is recorded by the 1660 visitor thus: 'Nigh hence on a brasse on the ground Hic jacet Johēs Pinnock primogenitus Thome Pinnock gentleman quondam societā de Greisine qui quidem Johēs obiit v die Augusti MCCCCCLXXXX cujus etc.' The matrix of this brass remains. This visitor identifies for us the monument in the north-east corner of the south chancel chapel, now without a name, though the mark of the brass plate is still visible. The inscription copied in 1660 ran: 'Here lyeth the body of George Symmons Gent: sometime dwelling in the house near the bridge foot, being a good benefactor to the poore people of this towne and departed this life the xxvii day of January 1590 God be prayed for him.' The house here mentioned is the one George Symons calls 'my new dwelling house called cobhall' in the will by which he left it to the poor of Burford. The entrance arch to the courtyard can be seen in the wall between *The Vicarage* and the river.² A tomb has disappeared from the Tanfield chapel. The 1660 visitor, after describing the Tanfield monument, proceeds: 'On an old raised monument of stone in this chappell this at the feet

Obitus Thome Frieri Burfordiæ epitaphius, qui vita
excessit 5^o Novembris anno dñi 1572'

and he adds some Latin verses from the monument, chiefly remarkable for containing a hexameter with seven feet.³ 'In the north ile of the Church', the visitor says, '2 proportions', or, as we should now say, effigies. Both of these have disappeared; but perhaps two large stone fragments preserved in the room over the porch may be relics of them. One piece is the half of a tilting helmet, such as is customarily found supporting the head of an armed figure on a tomb; the other piece, though it is difficult to recognize what it has been, may be

¹ He has just entered the Pynnok coat-of-arms from the glass in one of the windows.

² Now, in 1944, down but to be repaired after the present military occupation.

³ Thomas Freer appears frequently in the Burford Records; he was one of the original feoffees of the Grammar School lands.

THE CHURCH

the haunches of a dog or lion placed at the feet of an effigy. The lack in Burford history of resident lords of the manor, or other men likely to have armed effigies, makes these fragments the more interesting. Possibly one of them may have been on a monument to Robert Harcourt, seneschal of the town in 1465, and also seneschal here for the King-Maker. Finally, the 1660 visitor mentions the altar tomb in the north-west corner of the Lady chapel bearing the Barber Surgeons' arms, but even then the name on this had been lost. Comment on the monuments would be incomplete without a remark on the extraordinary fact that, with the exception of a tablet erected within the last few years to a descendant of the family who died in Australia in 1894, there is not a single memorial to any of the Lenthalls in the Church. More than twenty of them lie buried there, including five or six who were lords of the town and manor; and to no one of them is there any monument. Speaker Lenthall, it is true, left particular instructions that he was not to be commemorated in any such way; his burial place was to have no mark, save 'at the utmost a plain stone with this inscription only "Vermis Sum".' Even that stone is no longer to be seen; it is said to have been broken during some repairing of the Church in 1872. His son John died at Besselsleigh, and was buried there. But four succeeding owners of *The Priory* estate lie in *Burford Church*, each of whom might have been expected to leave some memorial behind him.

The coats of arms recorded by Sir Richard Lee, several of which appear also in Symonds's Notes of 1644, and the notes of the visitor in 1660, have many points of interest. Most of them have a traceable connection with the history of Burford; and they may in some instances help to date portions of the fabric. The coats of de Clare, Despenser and Beauchamp, as Lords of the manor, appeared frequently. The Stafford coat, which the 1660 visitor records, was due to the subinfeudations of the manor; Hugh, Earl of Stafford, held in 1387 by right of his descent, the half knight's fee originally held in Burford by the de Fanencourts. The visitor enters this coat as 'in the chappell on the south side' in one of the windows. 'The chapel' in these Notes of the 1500's and 1600's nearly always seems to mean the Lady chapel. But in this case the visitor has just been describing the tombs in the Lady chapel, and must obviously be referring to another part when he recommences 'in the chapel on the south side'. As

THE CHURCH

he goes on immediately to the nameless monument in the south transept, it would seem certain that in this case he is speaking of the chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury; and the presence of the Stafford coat there would not be inconsistent with the other indications of the date of that chapel. Lee, on the other hand, only speaks of one 'chapel', and it may therefore be taken that the following coats he records were in the Lady chapel.

Skochens in the top of the chapel:

Quarterly 1st and 4th a fess checky between 6 cross crosslets 2nd and 3rd two bends (untinctured).

Or three chevronels gules (Clare)

Gules a fess or between six cross crosslets or

Quarterly 1st and 4th argent 2nd and 3rd argent a fret sable over all a bend sable (Dispenser)

Twelve roundels a canton ermine

Gules three padlocks or

Where these escutcheons were placed does not now appear; they may have been on bosses of the roof, and have been lost when, in the 1700's, this roof was in grievous decay. At any rate, the presence among these coats of the Beauchamp coat—the fess and cross crosslets—would imply that the part of the building where it appeared is of a date subsequent to 1439, when the manor passed by marriage to the Beauchamp family. As Symonds records 'in the southe yle of the south west yle where the 2 Bayliffs etc sit'—clearly the old Gild chapel and present Lady chapel—the Beauchamp coat with the de Clare coat, it becomes more likely that Lee also was referring to this part of the Church. Lee records in one of the windows the following coats: Parted per saltire sable and gules on a fess or between three lions' heads erased argent three roses azure seeded or in base a cross crosslet of the last; and the same coat impaling argent a saltire azure between four woodpeckers proper (Woodward)—'Over it written John Pynnok and iii wyfes mccccxxxv.' Symonds gives these as 'in a southe windowe and southe yle of the Church'. Symonds also records the coats of arms on seven of the eight shields held by angels just below the battlements of the great south porch; and with his help, though the shields are now much ravaged by weather, six are still just decipherable. On the extreme left is the bear and ragged

THE CHURCH

staff; next it is a strange charge of a lion passant on the point of a sword in pale, hilt downwards; and next that the coat with three padlocks, already noted in the chapel, which was the coat of Sydenham of Tichmersh, one of whom married a Lovel of Minster Lovel¹ and may have given money to the building of the porch. The fourth shield Symonds does not figure, and it almost looks now as if it had always been blank. The fifth had the three leopards of England; the sixth, the cross fleury and martlets of Edward the Confessor, not now decipherable; the seventh, the three crowns of St. Edmund the King, and the eighth, so far destroyed now that hardly even the shield itself is left, bore the three chevronels of de Clare. The interesting point about these shields is that they include the device of the Nevilles, the bear and ragged staff, but do not include the Beauchamp coat which was in the Lady chapel. Now the town and manor passed from the Beauchamps to the Nevilles by the marriage of Lady Ann Beauchamp to the King-Maker in 1449. The lengthening of the old Gild chapel and the building of the south porch, which it was made to adjoin, must have both been part of a single plan. But the fact that the Beauchamp arms without the Neville device were in the chapel, and the Neville device without the Beauchamp arms is on the porch, shows that the chapel was finished before the building of the porch had reached its last stages. We also thus have proof that the whole plan belongs to the middle years of the 1400's.

Of the interior arrangements of the Church during the 1600's and 1700's we have little knowledge. Symonds records in his Notes that Essex quartered his army in the Church on June 6th, 1643, and 'used it with the greatest incivility', in especial tearing down the pennons and flags hanging over the Tanfield monument and wearing them as scarves. Entries in the Churchwardens' Accounts of payments 'for makinge cleane the Church when the souldiers went away', and 'for taking downe the wall for the carryinge of straw into the Church for the souldiers', appear to be records of a similar occupation by the Royalists. More vividly personal is the inscription cut on the lead lining of the font—'Anthony Sedley prisner 1649'—a relic of the time when the Levellers were shut into the Church. But of any extensive and systematic destruction by Puritans we have no

¹ Lee records in Minster Lovel Church a coat on which the Lovel arms impale the arms of Sydenham of Tichmersh.

THE CHURCH

record. Since Lee mentions so few coats of arms as existing in windows in 1574, we may take it that the painted windows had shared the fate of the altars and lights in the days of the Reformation.

In the 1600's a gallery was erected at the west end of the Church; and it was probably in consequence of this that the Burgesses moved out of their original chapel and converted the chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury into the Corporation pew. The new gallery would very likely obstruct the view from the Lady chapel. They can hardly have made the change before the end of the seventeenth century, because the monument erected by the Burgesses to John Harris in 1674, now in St. Thomas's chapel, used to be in the Lady chapel, and it would almost certainly have been placed by them in their particular portion of the Church.

In 1826 considerable changes took place, of which we have unusually exact record. The Rev. Alexander Dallas was at that time curate-in-charge, the vicar, the Rev. William Birch, being non-resident. Mr. Dallas had been an officer in the Army, and had fought in the Peninsular War; and he carried his military energy into his church work. He was a reformer of abuses in the town charities, and he repaired and re-pewed the Church with zeal, if not with knowledge.¹ The result of his alterations is preserved for us not only in a ground plan, dated 1827, now in the room over the porch, but still more vividly in an exact and beautifully made model of the Church, which is kept in the same place.² The western gallery, being then decayed, was removed, and another put up in the north aisle. The font was moved to a position near the Harman monument. The pulpit, much exalted, was placed at the west end of the nave, facing east, and the pews were set to face westwards. These peculiar arrangements disappeared forty years later, when, unfortunately, the organ was removed from the position it had hitherto occupied, on what had been the Rood loft. Some of the work done at this time is to be deplored; but the fabric of the Church was badly in need of attention. The Rev. J. H. Burgess was Vicar when the work was taken in hand; and on his resignation the Rev. W. A. Cass carried it on with zeal, until the greater part of the necessary repairs had

¹ More detailed description of Mr. Dallas's work will be found in Chapter VIII.

² It was the work of a Mr. Mann, who was clerk to Mr. J. S. Price, a solicitor practising in Burford at that time.



SIMON WISDOM'S HOUSE (1876), AND LOWER END OF HIGH STREET



THE GEORGE INN, HIGH STREET ENTRANCE

THE CHURCH

been completed. The modern glass, by Kempe, in the western windows and the windows of the north aisle was put in during Mr. Cass's time, except one in the north aisle which is in memory of him.

From the date of the death of Vicar Anthony Cass, which took place on the last day of the year 1906, I turn to insert a few notes on historical matters connected with the Church. At this point some such break is a necessity in order to make clearly evident the fact that Canon William Emeris, to whom I have already said that much of the foregoing portion of this chapter is owed, has no part—in the quality of his taste could have no part—in the paragraphs following these Historical Notes, which paragraphs tell something of the immense amount he and his friends effected for the renewing and restoring of beauty in Burford Church.

* * *

THE RECTORY AND THE VICARAGE. Evidence for The Synod having been shown in Richard Gretton's large volume *Burford Records* to be insufficient, authentic Church History in Burford opens with the gift of *The Rectory of Burford* and *The Chapelry of Fulbrook* to the Abbey of Keynsham by William Earl of Gloucester the Founder of that Abbey. This was sometime between 1167 and 1172. A certain amount of land would have gone with the Church—the rectorial and vicarial glebe of later times—and a portion of this land must have been the ground upon which *The Rectory* and *The Vicarage* were built. Earliest documentary mention of *The Vicarage* is in 1384 in a grant of certain houses standing between *The Vicarage* and the river. Of *The Rectory* there is no mention at anything like so early a date; the first definite reference to it is of the year 1546 when Edmund Harman was holding it. Most unfortunately, owing to a gap in its history from 1634 to 1741 it is not possible to discover the builder of the house that is the present *Rectory*, which must have been built about the end of the 1600's. It is our best example of the work of that time. *The Vicarage*, presumably, has always occupied its present, *High Street*, position. Of the existing building, the oldest portion is the wing furthest removed from the street; the ground floor of that belongs to the 1500's. To whom we owe the addition of the charming street façade of the year 1672, is not known. The central part of the house was rebuilt in the mid-1800's.

THE CHURCH

THE CHURCHWARDENS. At the earliest date there is no mention of churchwardens in our documents, and for several hundred years afterwards, they were four in number. They appear in the first regular list of Parish Officers, which begins in 1613, as holding office thus—one for the Rector, one for the Vicar and two for the township. On the origin of this very unusual custom we have little light. In the controversy of 1738–43, over the administration of Burford charities, there was indeed some discussion of the position of the four. The Royal Commission of 1738 had decided that in several charities with which, until then, the churchwardens had had no part they should then be joined with the Bailiffs and Burgesses. But the Burgesses objected to this order largely on the ground that the two township churchwardens were generally under the influence of the Lord of the Manor. But the interesting points urged by the Bailiffs and Burgesses were these—firstly, that the Rector's churchwarden certainly ought to have no voice in the town charities, because the Rector's nomination was on behalf of 'the outward tythings' of *Upton* and *Signett*; and secondly, that, strictly, one of the township churchwardens was the representative of the Corporation.

The respondents in the case, while not contesting the first point, denied entirely that the Bailiffs and Burgesses had ever enjoyed the right of electing a churchwarden of their own; yet no alternative explanation of the existence of two wardens for the township was offered. If the representative of 'the outward tythings' had been one of these two the system would have been comprehensible; but no attempt was made to establish that position. It may, in fact, have been the truth; for it seems unlikely that the Rector would have any special reason to nominate the warden for those tythings. It is more probable that originally his warden fulfilled the normal duty of representing the owner of the chancel of the Church; *The Rectory* being inappropriate, a Vicar's warden also had been elected; and as happened elsewhere, the township being in two distinct portions, parishioners' wardens were elected for each. But when *The Rectory* passed to lay hands, and had been held for some time by men who were also lords of the manor, with their chief interests in *Upton* and *Signett*, the most natural explanation of their nomination of a warden in the minds of men who had no knowledge of the original system,

THE CHURCH

was that this warden was the *Upton* and *Signett* warden. Then, in order to account for the two parishioners' wardens, the theory of a Corporation warden was invented. Another explanation is, however, just possible. In mediaeval times, when the Gild chapel and the Church were separate structures, each had its own 'proctors' or wardens, responsible for the fabric, the ornaments and plate. It may be that, when the Gild chapel became an integral part of the Church, the separate responsibility was continued—one of the two Gild proctors acting in conjunction with one of the two Church proctors. In other words, the Bailiffs and Burgesses may have had a sound tradition at the back of their claim; and in that case the theory of a warden for *Upton* and *Signett* was the invention. In support of this it may be remarked that at no point in the existing Church records is there any entry of a warden as elected or nominated for the outward tythings. The normal entries throughout the 1600's are—one church-warden *pro rectore*, one *pro vicario*, and two *pro villa*. But this regularity in the formula is not attained immediately. When Sir Lawrence Tanfield held *The Rectory* the rector's warden is usually entered as 'for my lord being parson', or in his later years simply 'for my lord'. In 1626-7 the entry is 'for the Lady Tanfield', and in 1628 'for my lady'. This personal formula continues to be used for some years in the entries of a warden 'for Sir Lucius Cary', but gives place in 1630 to one more official in character, but quite unjustifiable, '*pro domino Burgi*'; it was not as lord of the town, but as rector, that Lord Falkland exercised this nomination. It is interesting to observe that in 1638 the words *domino Burgi* have been erased, and *rectore* substituted. We observe the accuracy of the legal mind of William Lenthall, whose first nomination this was. Hereafter *pro Rectore* becomes the invariable form. The two parishioners' wardens are entered for the first twenty years after 1613 as 'for the parish'. This is strong evidence against the later theory that the 'outward tythings' were represented by the rector's warden; for *Upton* and *Signett* were certainly part of the ecclesiastical parish of Burford, and wardens 'for the parish' must have represented the hamlets as well as the town. In one year, 1635, at the time when the Rector's warden was being entered as *pro domino Burgi*, the parish wardens are entered as *pro Burgo*, an equally unjustifiable form, since the *Burgus* excluded part of the parish. It only occurs once, and may have been due to carelessness; or we may

THE CHURCH

perhaps see in it a hint of the theory that *Upton* and *Signett* were represented through the rectorial warden.

The custom of four Churchwardens continued until 1871. For many years the office of rector's warden had been served by Mr. C. F. A. Faulkner, of *Bury Barns*. He died in 1870; and in the minutes of the Easter Vestry meeting of 1871 the following passage occurs: 'In consequence of the death of Mr. Allen Faulkner and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the present Rectors, not having nominated any successor to him as Churchwarden on their part the appointment to this remains in abeyance.' So it remains to the present day. The parishioners still elect two wardens, and the Vicar nominates one. But no rector's warden has been nominated since 1871.

THE PARISH REGISTERS of Burford that are now extant begin in the year 1612, when Philip Hill was Vicar. They appear to have been for the most part carefully kept, without intermission. Their only signs of disturbance of the Civil War are contained in the two entries in the Register Book of Church Officers. Under the date 1642 is 'The three churchwardens Richard Veysey, Symon Ward and Henry Hayter being churchwardens the yeare past were continued in the office by the vicar and parishioners for the yeare by reason the government of the Church at this time was unsettled'. (The Rector, Speaker Lenthall, had nominated a churchwarden as usual.) After date 1643 appears 'There hath beene noe choice made of Churchwardens by reason of troublesome tymes since the 4th day of April 1642 until the 20th of April 1647'.

* * *

Fortunate it was for Burford Church at the opening of 1907 that the Rev. W. C. Emeris, successor of Mr. Burgess and Mr. Cass, possessed, in addition to their zeal, taste and antiquarian knowledge. No mere list of renovations carried out during his vicarate—1907–1937—can cover the facts of his devotion to, and entirely unostentatious personal expenditure on, the fabric. Yet a list even is impressive. For between 1907 and 1920 the roofs of the Porch, of the Lady chapel, and of the Tanfield chapel, all were completely repaired and re-leaded; the elaborate Tanfield monument was strengthened throughout; these major restorations being over and above numberless minor rectifications. Also, relying on the knowledge and taste of the new vicar, there began at this time a series of gifts to Burford Church which was to con-

THE CHURCH

tinued for some thirty years without intermission. Devoted to this County and writer of the first genuine *History of Oxfordshire* (Elliot Stock 1899), John Meade Falkner's connection with the Nobles of Newcastle-on-Tyne will be spoken of in Chapter X of this book. Here we but note the connection of names when, early in Mr. Emeris's time, the window in the South Transept (the so-called Leggare chapel) was filled with stained glass by Whall and inscribed with the words 'Pray for the good estate of the three Johns—John Leggare, John Meade Falkner, and John Noble'. The same two friends—Meade Falkner and Sir John Noble—completely restored and refurnished, in 1910-11, the Lady Chapel, erecting its present reredos of Campden stone and also laying its floor with local stone. Indeed this treatment of the Lady Chapel was fundamental; for, in the 1700's and 1800's the said chapel had lost its devotional character, even becoming known as 'the Sylvester aisle' because of containing the sideboard-like, replica, Sylvester tombs! So complete now was the chapel's restoring that in October 1911 it was re-dedicated. Into the south wall a stone piscina and credence were then built; these are based on a fifteenth-century model, the credence bracket being built in over the basin and the whole covered with a pierced canopy. These and numerous other details of this renewing of the Lady Chapel should be recorded; because until very shortly before his death, in 1932, John Meade Falkner continued collecting on his travels over Europe and bringing to Burford—lectern, silver crucifix and silver candlesticks, lovely Italian altar frontal and similar gifts to ensure this particular chapel's perfection: and it certainly appears as a condition of their acceptance that these things should not be moved elsewhere. Further, at his death in 1932, Mr. Meade Falkner bequeathed money for insertion of the two stained glass windows nearest to the altar in this Lady chapel. Again, that these two windows, designed by Mr. F. C. Eden and notable for their clear glass background, should not be disturbed by unsuitable adjacent glass was the primary reason for the presentation of a third and similar window by Canon Emeris himself in 1939—'as a thank offering for 51 years' service in the Ministry'.

In 1925 Canon Emeris had placed, on the west wall of the Church, a Memorial Tablet to those who had fallen in the war of 1914-18, obtaining as its designer Mr. E. B. Hoare who had been the architect of the Lady Chapel reredos.

CHAPTER V

EARLY HISTORY OF THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The origin of the Hospital of St. John the Evangelist in Burford, called in modern days *The Priory*, is unknown. The earliest recorded reference to it is of the year 1226. Most probably it owed its origin to William, Earl of Gloucester (founder of *Keynsham Abbey* in Somerset), at the time he was Lord of the Manor of Burford—1147–83. The Hospital was very small, its revenue never exceeded £16 a year; the name *Priory* is of modern date, and we shall come nearer to the facts by relating its early structure in our minds to a mediæval manor house rather than to a monastery. A small independent foundation, of the Augustinian Rule, it maintained a Master and two or three Brethren, and afforded a shelter for sick people and poor travellers. It never had any manorial rights in Burford. It was surrendered to the Crown upon the Dissolution of the Monasteries, having for some time previously become little more than a sinecure for one elderly priest. As to the appearance of the hospital at this time, we have little material for conjecture. That it was a building of the 1400's is shown by such remains as survive in the present *Priory* house. Three fine pointed arches, now erected across the hall, were found to have been incorporated in one of the walls of the mansion which Sir Lawrence Tanfield built on the site. Another arch, in what is now a back passage, indicates that there was also an old wall running north and south along the western end of the building in which the arches stood. The walls of a ruined wing behind the house show clearly ancient work, refaced with new work, apparently in the 1600's. The three arches, appearing as they do to have belonged to a building lying east and west, may be remains of the chapel; and the old wall running north and south may mark the site of the hall or refectory, carrying perhaps an upper structure with a solar for the Master's use, a dormitory for the two or three Brethren, and an infirmary for the sick. The ruined back wing would contain kitchens, brew-houses, store-houses, etc. Around the buildings was

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

an enclosed space of meadows, pasture, orchards, and garden plot, the whole occupying much the same area as the modern gardens and wood.

In 1543 the property was granted to Edmund Harman, one of the King's barber-surgeons, for the term of his life and his wife's. But he, when he retired from Court, probably never lived here, for he settled at Taynton, the manor of which had also been granted to him. The lease to Harman appears to have been prolonged to a son-in-law. But before the end of the century, the place had reverted to the Crown and been acquired by Sir Lawrence Tanfield, afterwards Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Tanfield was the first to make of the Hospital a mansion. He built on the site a large Elizabethan house costing about £5,000 (£25,000 or £30,000 in modern money). Here he entertained James I in 1603. In 1617 Tanfield acquired also the lordship of the manor and town of Burford. He thus completed his creation of an estate by making *The Priory* the seat of the Manor.¹ He also recovered, by law, from the Corporation of Burford, certain manorial rights upon which during the previous century Burford had encroached. From Tanfield *The Priory* estate passed for a few years to his wife, who erected the great monument in the Church. From her it passed to Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, whose mother was the daughter and only child of the Tanfields. The life of this daughter, a woman of much character and some learning, was not a happy one. Even in her childhood so little regard was paid to her real interests that she had to bribe servants to provide her with candles to study by at night. At the age of fifteen (she was born in 1585) she was married to Henry Cary, first Viscount Falkland, and accompanied him in his vice-royalty of Ireland, where she endeavoured to alleviate distress by setting up and encouraging Home industries among the Irish peasants—a remarkably early instance of that kind of concern for the people. But her husband's manner of life was extravagant, and her dowry was soon engulfed. This appears to have caused her father to decide that she should not succeed to his estates; and when Lucius Cary was born, in 1610 at *The Priory*, Tanfield kept the boy to live with him. He may, however, also have disapproved of his daughter in other ways. From early years she had taken an interest in theo-

¹ It remained so until 1908, when Mr. A. R. Hurst sold the house to Colonel B. de Sales La Terrière; but not the lordship of the manor.

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

logical disputes, which inclined her towards the Roman Church. She was not actually received into that communion until after her father's death; but he may have suspected her leanings. At any rate, her reception into the Roman Church was at the cost of much suffering. Her husband, who had for some time treated her badly, seized the opportunity to repudiate all responsibility for her; most of her friends were alienated, and she fell into very real poverty. Her mother, Lady Tanfield, refused to receive her at *The Priory*; and she was actually dependent for some years on sums as small as half-a-crown which she could borrow from a few remaining friends. She also tried to earn a little money by translating some extremely tedious works of theological controversy. When, at her mother's death her son succeeded to the estates, her poverty was relieved by him, even though she alienated him by her persistent determination to bring his younger brothers, as she had previously brought his sisters, under the influence of the Roman Church. In view of the circumstances of her life, the presence of her effigy kneeling at the head of the tomb of her father and mother in Burford Church is something of an irony.

Falkland made his real home at *Great Tew*, and in 1637 he sold *The Priory* to William Lenthall, who was to become the well-known Speaker of the Long Parliament. Lenthall's father had owned property at *Hailey*, and at *Wilcote* where he was buried. Thus William Lenthall must have known Burford from his childhood; and he was living here in 1626, when his second son was baptised in Burford Church. In 1631 he was counsel for the town in the proceedings in the Court of Exchequer with regard to certain Charity Lands. Some time after buying *The Priory*—perhaps not until the various offices he held under the Commonwealth had made him a rich man—he made considerable alterations to the mansion Tanfield had built; and produced the house which Skelton engraved, in his *Antiquities of Oxfordshire*, early in the 1800's. Tanfield's house had been of the familiar Elizabethan type, with wings and a projecting porch. Lenthall doubled the width of the wings, his additions being on the inside of one wing and the outside of the other so that the porch was no longer in the middle. He also brought from the south front, and re-erected at the ends of the two wings, the handsome bays which are a feature of the existing façade, thus leaving the south frontage flat and

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ugly. To Lenthall also must be attributed the unsightly chimney-piece of the present drawing-room; and in 1661-2 he built the even more unsatisfactory chapel. From the Restoration onwards he resided entirely at Burford; and he must always have preferred *The Priory* to his other—and earlier—estate at *Besselsleigh*, since it was to Burford that he brought those famous pictures which he had obtained from Charles I's collection at Windsor. Among these were the two pictures of Sir Thomas More's family ascribed to Holbein, a Vandyke of Henrietta Maria, and two Correggios. Here also was the portrait of himself now in the National Portrait Gallery.

At William Lenthall's death he was succeeded by his son John, who appeared under the Commonwealth to be a more convinced Parliament man, even, than his father, and was knighted by Cromwell. Nevertheless he made his peace at the Restoration. These facts, perhaps, explain the bitter feeling with which he was regarded by Anthony Wood, who stigmatizes him as 'the grand Braggadochio and Lyar of the age he lived in'. He seems to have been little at Burford, preferring his other house at *Besselsleigh*. For a few months, at this time, *The Priory* was let to the great Duke of Ormonde, who lived there from November 1672, to February, 1673. Charles II dined at *The Priory*, in March, 1681, on his way from Oxford to the races at Burford; but John Lenthall was then at *Besselsleigh*, where he died in November of that year.

John Lenthall's son, William, held the estate a short time, dying in 1686, and leaving two sons. He had married a lady of the Court, Catherine Hamilton. She, after his death, married her cousin, Lord Abercorn, and continued to live on at *The Priory*. On November 3, 1695, William III spent the night there with the Abercorns. Lady Abercorn's reputation was far from good; she was on thoroughly bad terms with the town so it is not surprising that gossip should have been rife when, on April 3, 1697, John Pryor, one of William Lenthall's trustees for his two boys, was found, murdered, in *The Priory* grounds. The theory most favoured was that Pryor, dutifully protecting the interests of his wards, had come in the way of Abercorn schemes. Abercorn was tried for murder at the Oxford Assizes. The Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Arran came there to plead on his behalf, and he was acquitted. But no one else was ever convicted of the murder.

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The elder of the boys—John Lenthall—next succeeded, and he lived long—until 1753. This John's son William came into the estate; he died in 1781. William's brother, John, succeeded him. His son, the last of the Burford John Lenthalls, has already been mentioned as diverting the old main road out of *Sheep Street* in order to secure privacy for *The Priory* grounds. He also destroyed the character of the Elizabethan house, pulling down the frontage (the whole place was certainly badly out of repair, owing largely to Speaker Lenthall's poor building methods) and setting it up again in its present very restricted form—cutting out two bays, lowering the gables and the porch, destroying the top storey, and altogether reducing the frontage to less than half the length of Tanfield's mansion.

At this John Lenthall's death, the estate was left so encumbered that his son and heir, William John Lenthall, after selling separately various parts of the property, and removing the pictures, brought the Lenthall connection with Burford to an end in 1828.

The Priory and what remained of the estate were then sold to Charles Greenaway, of *Little Barrington*. Greenaway came of a family that had made a fortune in business in Gloucester, and his father had bought *Barrington Grove*, with the lordship of that manor, before the end of the eighteenth century. Passing from Mr. Greenaway to his niece—Miss Youde—the place was for many years in Chancery; and the house fell into ruins. It came from Miss Youde to the family of Mrs. Greenaway—the Hursts, of Horsham Park, Sussex—but it remained ruinous, house and grounds open to all comers. From this fact—its serviceableness as a recreation place for the countryside, even for Oxford—it gained a notoriety and became more generally known than finer houses in the district, such as *Chastleton House* or *Shipton Court*. As a ruin it came, too, for the first time into the affections of the neighbourhood. In that form, also, it passed into fiction in *Guy and Pauline*, as it had already passed into painting in Waller's picture, 'The Empty Saddle'.¹ Its rebuilding and reinhabiting, with that of a number of other Burford houses, belongs to the present century, and, therefore, to Chapter IX of this book.

Burford Grammar School was founded in the year 1571. Traditionally Simon Wisdom occupies the position of Founder of it. But that tradition requires some modification; for the honour of the original

¹ The painter was at the old Rectory.

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

action towards setting up the school does not belong to him. His deed of gift is dated October, 1571; and in May of that year other men of Burford had arranged an endowment for the school. In a deed of May, 1571, the donors were Richard Dalby and Edmund Silvester, Bailiffs of Burford; William Partridge, John Lymme the elder, and Bennett Fawler, three of the Burgesses of Burford; William Silvester, 'clotheman', and Thomas Apper, tailor; all of these described as 'co-feoffees of the parish lands of Burford'.

Such 'parish lands' as remained to the place at this time were, of course, the few that had escaped the great confiscation of charities at the beginning of Edward VI's reign (of the eleven properties of the deed of May, 1571, seven can be identified as those then preserved). Yet, in 1567, the Attorney General had brought a case in the Court of Exchequer attempting to seize these remaining lands to the Crown. Happily for Burford the case was not successful; but the bringing of it may well have suggested to the minds of the Burford trustees the expediency of putting into effect what clearly had been the intention of Edward VI. For the report of the original inquiry of his reign, as to what Burford property would fall under the Act of Confiscation of that date, now in the Record Office, contains the phrase 'the said towne of Burford ys a very great markett towne Replenysshed with much people. And needful to have a Scole there'. Moreover, the general founding of Grammar Schools, begun under Edward VI, had been rapidly advancing under Elizabeth; and the suit of 1567 must have further impressed upon the men of Burford that, in the wide and grasping meaning given after the Reformation to the term 'superstitious uses', properties here such as the Cakebred land (given originally for the founding of an obit) or 'Jesus Acre'—betraying its purpose in its name—were on insecure tenure.

Simon Wisdom, in his own deed of gift, does not speak of himself as Founder, but as 'one of the Founders'. Yet, when all is said, it is evident that the original movement for the school hung fire till Wisdom's management was brought to bear on it. Although the conveyance of the charity property is dated May, 1571, the new feoffees did not actually enter into possession until February, 1572. And to Wisdom's deed of gift, of October, 1571, is appended a full Constitution for the School—arranging its finance, government, how the headmaster was to be appointed, and the boys disciplined and

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

taught. The Corporation Memorandum books of that time also have numerous entries of sums advanced by Wisdom to the builders at work on the School. He is, in short, if not the Founder strictly, to be regarded as having done much more than merely add, out of his private property, enough to the original endowment to make sufficient income, in the money of that day, for the payment of a school-master.

So came the first *Grammar School* building at the corner of *Church Lane*—humble, but not without dignity. It was a day-school merely, and the Master lived apart from it, elsewhere in Burford. All that this earliest school block provided was classrooms for elder boys, 'the Grammar Scholars', and younger boys 'the petties' at the stage of learning their alphabet. In 1628 the income of the School was increased by the raising of rents, which the Royal Commissioners of that year commanded in all the branches of the Burford Charities. That the two school 'wardens' were regularly appointed at this time the Register of Parish Officers shows; and the books of early accounts that survive were carefully kept.

For the first century and a half of its existence the School may be said to have no history beyond the production of the earliest of its notable scholars—Peter Heylin. Born in 1600, of a family whose name appears fairly frequently in Burford records at the time, he entered Magdalen College as a Demy in 1616, after receiving his schooling at Burford. Late in the seventeenth century, too, John Wilmot, afterwards Earl of Rochester, attended the School from his home at *Ditchley*.

With the 1700's the Grammar School fell into the slough of mismanagement of all other public interests in Burford at the time. The School accounts, instead of their earlier entries of the wardens' expenditure on the concerns of the School, show merely payments of the whole income to the master—Richard Griffiths. The teaching was entirely neglected; no usher, for the younger boys, was appointed for many years; Griffiths made no pretence of instructing the elder ones; the whole school income he expended on himself. By the time of the law suit following another Royal Commission (in 1743) he had been proved to be of unsound mind. From this depth it took the School very long to recover; yet in the latter half of the century two persons of note received their earliest teaching here—Sir William

THE PRIORY AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Beechey, Royal Academician, born in Burford in 1753, and Charles Jenkinson, first Earl of Liverpool and Prime Minister.

The present *School House* dates from 1868; in 1876 the Constitution that obtained till 1925 was drawn up by the Charity Commissioners. Of the School's history since 1925 details are given in Chapters VIII and X.

CHAPTER VI

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR, AND MUNIMENTS IN BURFORD

THE list of the lords of the manor of Burford is a remarkable one. Many of the names on it have been known; but this is the first time that the whole descent of the lordship has been traced, leaving no step in the succession unaccounted for. The most interesting addition to the names of the known lords of Burford is, undoubtedly, Robert of Gloucester. Discovery of him was due to recognizing, as granted by him, a charter occupying an obscure place on the Burford Gild Certificate—it had been placed by the Burgesses, who made the certificate, out of its due order. It is interesting also to have established King John's tenure of Burford; and, on the lesser plane of picturesque associations, to have inserted the names of Edward, son of the Duke of Clarence, executed on charges of complicity with Perkin Warbeck; and of that skilful but unpleasant personage, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.

It is, of course, to its connection with the territories of one of the greatest of feudal Honours that Burford owes the remarkably distinguished list of its lords. The Honour of Gloucester was the chief item in the lands granted to FitzHamon by William Rufus; and the history of Burford shows that the former possessions of the Bishop of Bayeux in this extreme western portion of Oxfordshire were attached by FitzHamon, no doubt as a measure of administrative convenience, to his Gloucester territories, to which, indeed, spite of county divisions, they have natural affinity. It appears also that, in some subdivision of the territories, Burford, together with *Fairford* and one or two other places, was grouped with *Tewkesbury*. Certain writs of King John concerning Burford are addressed, not to the Sheriff of Oxfordshire, but to William de la Faleise, Keeper of the Manor of *Tewkesbury*; and in an early account of escheats (1232-3), when the Honour was held by the Crown as guardian during the minority of Richard de Clare, the revenues of the manor of Burford are

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR

definitely allotted in the main 'ad partem de Theokbiri'. Thus *Tewkesbury* may be regarded, in some sense, as a mother-place to Burford; and with more than slight stirrings of loyalty the Burford man stands in the Abbey Church there, looking on the tombs of those to whom his predecessors owed allegiance. He may turn his eyes to the beautiful little chantry on the north side of the chancel, where were laid, 'wrapped in fine diaper', the bones of him who first gave Burford men their liberties and their Gild and he may see, patterned on the tiles of the chantry floor, the rampant lion which from that day to this Burford has borne as its arms. Meanwhile, beneath the chancel floor, dust of the de Clares mingles with the dust of royalty; and, close by FitzHamon's chantry, Hugh de Despenser, son of Edward II's favourite, lies at his mailed length; while, opposite, Edward le Dispenser kneels on the roof of his chantry, facing towards the altar, in age-long prayer.

The following is the list of the Lords of the Manor of Burford:

- 1085 Odo, Bishop of Bayeux.
- 1088 Robert FitzHamon.
- 1107 Robert of Gloucester, natural son of Henry I.
- 1147 William, Earl of Gloucester.
- 1183 The Crown.
- 1189 John, afterwards King of England.
- 1206 Amaury, Count of Evreux.
- 1214 Geoffrey de Mandeville.
- 1216 William de Cantilupe.
- 1217 Gilbert de Clare.
- 1230 Richard de Clare, 8th Earl of Gloucester.
- 1262 Gilbert de Clare, 9th Earl of Gloucester.
- 1295 Joan, widow of Gilbert de Clare, daughter of Edward I.
- 1305 Ralph de Monthermer.
- 1312 Gilbert de Clare, 10th Earl of Gloucester.
- 1316 Isabella de Clare.
- 1322 Hugh le Despenser, and Eleanor de Clare, his wife.
- 1328 Eleanor, widow of Hugh le Despenser.
- 1337 Hugh le Despenser, son of the preceding.
- 1359 Edward le Despenser.
- 1375 Thomas le Despenser.
- 1399 The Crown.

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR

- 1439 Isabel, Countess of Warwick.
- 1439 Henry Beauchamp, Duke of Warwick.
- 1446 Lady Anne, daughter of the preceding.
- 1449 Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, 'The King-Maker'.
- 1471 The Crown.
- 1479 Edward, son of the Duke of Clarence.
- 1487 The Crown.
- 1489 Anne, Countess of Warwick, widow of the King-Maker.
- 1493 The Crown.
- 1549 John, Earl of Warwick.
- 1552 The Crown.
- 1601 Sir John Fortescue, Chancellor and Sub-Treasurer of the Exchequer.
- 1617 Sir Lawrence Tanfield, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer.
- 1625 Lady Tanfield.
- 1629 Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland.
- 1637 William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons.
- 1662 Sir John Lenthall.
- 1681 William Lenthall.
- 1686 John Lenthall.
- 1763 William Lenthall.
- 1781 John Lenthall.
- 1783 John Lenthall.
- 1820 William John Lenthall.
- 1828 Charles Greenaway.
- 1859 Charlotte Sophia Greenaway (Estate was in Chancery).
- 1875 Mary Jane Youde.
- 1892 Robert Henry Hurst.
- 1905 Arthur Reginald Hurst.

The muniments of the ancient Corporation of the Bailiffs, Alderman and Burgesses of Burford, which are now in the town, are in three ownerships. One portion, together with the maces and seals of the Corporation, is in the possession of the Cheatles, the late Mr. T. H. Cheatle having been the last surviving Burgess, and his father the last Alderman, of the Corporation. A second portion is in the possession of the Charity Trustees, who replaced the Corporation, and is



ARCHWAY IN WITNEY STREET
(*standing until 1918*)



'MR. GLYN'S NEW TENEMENT,' ON RENT ROLL OF 1685
(now called 'The Great House')

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR

kept at the Tolsey. The third portion, a small one, is in the possession of the Governors of the *Grammar School*, having been handed over to them—foundation deeds of the School and a few leases of School property. The main division of these muniments took place in 1861, after the extinction of the Corporation. Before that they were all kept in two old chests and a chest of drawers, in one of the rooms over the Church porch. Thence they were taken to the house of Mr. T. H. Cheatle. A few years later, however, he made a division of them, handing over about half to the Charity Trustees. Roughly speaking, this division appears to have been made on the principle of giving to the Charity Trustees the bulk of documents dealing with gifts to the Church, and retaining those concerned with property which had been more or less exclusively under the Corporation's control. The numerous documents concerning the Royal Commission of 1738 and the Chancery proceedings of 1742 were divided into two parts. The manuscripts were examined years ago by the Rev. W. D. Macray, on behalf of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. But, only a small portion of the records being true municipal records, Mr. Macray did not find it worth while to calendar many of them. The volume of the Historical Manuscripts Commission (Various Collections, No. I, published in 1902) contains his account of the records, with a calendar of the Charters, a transcript of the Roll of the Burgess Rules, notes on a few of the more ancient grants of land and on later documents possessing special interest, such as the one bearing the signature of the King-Maker. For the purposes of the Historical Manuscripts Commission it was not necessary to do more; but for a history of the Corporation of Burford it was necessary to go through all the records, and the opportunity was taken by Richard Gretton to make a complete Calendar, and at the same time to put into order the mass of documents which were in confusion. They are now in chronological order, dated, and arranged under letters.

The two maces, and the two seals are all of outstanding interest. The earlier of the maces is of silver and measures thirteen and three-sixteenth inches in length. It has a plain slender shaft (with an iron core) to which are affixed, just below the centre, five wavy flanges with moulded edges and enclosing strap-work scrolls. Just below the head is a moulded ring, and at the bottom is a flat button

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR

engraved, seal fashion, with a lion rampant. The head, which is supported by a calyx of sixteen petals, is globular in form and surmounted by a coronet of ten crosses and as many fleurs-de-lis, resting on a bold cable moulding. On the flat top, within a quatrefoil, are the royal arms, *France modern and England quarterly*, originally enamelled. This interesting mace is almost certainly of the 1500's, but the lion on the button looks later. The other mace is two feet nine inches and five-eighths long, and also of silver. It is of the usual late type with crowned head surmounted by the orb and cross, but the design of the shaft is somewhat unusual. The head, which is supported by four slender brackets, is handsomely wrought with four frosted oval panels, with ornate leafwork between, containing the usual royal badges, *viz.*, the rose, thistle, fleur-de-lis, and harp, severally crowned. The crown surmounting the head has a delicately worked coronet, and jewelled arches depressed in the centre so as to touch the cap beneath, which bears in relief the royal arms and supporters in use from 1714 to 1801, with the arms of Burford below. The shaft consists of (1) a short plain section with the brackets below the mace-head; (2) a long section, with slight medial band and two panelled terminal bosses, ornamented throughout with a bold leaf pattern arranged as a spiral band; below this again is (3) the handle or grip, at first plain, then wrought with leaves, and gradually swelling out towards the foot-knop, which is also chased with leafwork. The mace bears the leopard's head and lion passant gardant of the London hall-marks, but no date letter, and for the maker, I W with a rose above, for John Wisdome (entered 1720). The maker's mark is twice struck, and similarly repeated under the head.

The common seal, of silver, is of the unusual form of a pointed oval, two and one-eighth inches long. The device is a boldly engraved lion rampant facing to the sinister (probably by inadvertence on the part of the engraver) with the marginal legend

✠ SIGILL · COMMUNE · BURGENSEIUM · DE · BUREFORD

On either side of the lion are the two centres from which the curved sides and lines of the seal were struck. On the back is a loop for suspension, from which three long leaf-like branches diverge and extend over the seal. Date, *circa* 1250. The other seal, which is attached to the silver one by a plaited leather thong, has probably been used as a

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR

counterseal. It is a pointed oval, one and three-eighths inches long, and of latten, with a small loop at the top, The design represents a clerk in amice and girded alb kneeling under a trefoiled arch surmounted by a half-length figure of Our Lady and Child. Legend¹:—

✠ AVE MARIA GR̄A PLENA DNS TECUM

¹ This description of the maces and seals is from *Corporation Plate and Insignia of Office*, by L. Jewitt, F.S.A., and W. H. St. John Hope, M.A.

CHAPTER VII

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

The first grant of liberties to Burford is of remarkably early date. It provides, indeed, the earliest dated instance of the establishment of a Gild Merchant. For the first charter is in the name of Robert FitzHamon, and must have been granted between 1088 and 1107. And this grant was not of a Gild Merchant alone. It included also the liberties customary in the setting up of a borough, namely, the right to hold houses and lands at a money rent instead of service, the right to sell or otherwise dispose of property and to devise property by will without obligation to the lord of the manor, the right to hold a market, and other 'free customs'—in this case free customs matching those of the men of Oxford.

The community to which this grant was made was a village community of the type usual in 'Domesday'. Of other villages within the same Hundred *Stanton Harcourt*, for instance, was larger; and *Bampton*, with its four mills, fisheries, and saltings, was more than six times as valuable. Possibly Burford had declined somewhat from earlier importance in Anglo-Saxon days, but the reason of FitzHamon's charter lies nearer at hand. In 1088 FitzHamon, in reward for his support of William Rufus against the rebellion of Bishop Odo, received a large gift of lands formerly held by the Bishop, among these the manor of Burford, which he incorporated in the Honour of Gloucester. In this way Burford, from having been in all probability the principal seat of a manorial lord, became an outlying dependency of a lord possessed of far more important residences. As a source of supplies, too, Burford, to a man of FitzHamon's magnificence, would be insignificant. It is probable, therefore, that in reviewing his acquired territories, the new lord bethought himself of making Burford a source of revenue by instituting in it a market which would pay tolls and a court that would collect fees.

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

Of the documents concerning Burford, from FitzHamon's charter to the last royal grant in 1606, which have come to be called charters, the first six may be called so rightly; the remainder are Letters Patent of Confirmation. Four of these charters are from the lords of the manor, and two from the Crown. The two royal charters, however, are not addressed to the town, but to William, Earl of Gloucester, confirming rights and privileges of his, with special clauses referring to Burford. These early documents, in fact, do not anywhere suggest response to demands for liberties made by the town; they are grants to, and arrangements by, the manorial lord for development of his property. Most of their terms, too, are vague. The only two that are practically effective are FitzHamon's and one of Henry II. These two give us the setting up of burgage tenure with the right of testamentary disposition; a Gild Merchant; a market with a ban of wool and hides to the inhabitants; freedom from external pleas; and cognisance of minor offences. These franchises, up to the end of Henry II's reign, would not be inadequate for a community such as Burford. But when we find them unmodified in the 1300's, and standing thus beside the charters of other boroughs developed and established firmly and clearly in the reigns of Richard and John (these reigns were a time singularly active in the securing by English towns of their rights and privileges, and Burford has no documents belonging to them) their limitations become very apparent. Privileges—such as the holding of the borough at farm, the return of writs, the right to appoint a reeve or other chief officer, the right to appoint coroners, freedom from Hundred and Shire courts with the right to appear before the Justices in Eyre by twelve representatives of the town—commonly possessed by boroughs in the 1300's, have no place in the Burford charters. This again suggests that the whole group of these charters emanated from the overlord's wish to develop Burford as a source of revenue, and not from burghal development or demand: the lord of the manor's motive would prompt the minimum only of modification in the machinery of Government, the townsfolk would, surely, have demanded the maximum.

As to the nature of the executive that came into being under the earliest charters we have not much information. We can, however, establish the existence, by the middle of the 1200's, of, first, a Common Seal; secondly, a Borough Court of a three-weekly type; thirdly,

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

Bailiffs of the town; fourthly, a limited body of inhabitants discharging a fixed rental. The earliest reference to the Common Seal is especially interesting; for it speaks, not of the Common Seal of the Burgesses, but of the Common Seal of Burford.¹ That is, we have already (in 1250) the presence of the idea of the town's personality, as something other than the sum of its inhabitants. And in the Court of the Burgesses we can, also, discern a vehicle for this idea; a group of men in which the town's personality was beginning to be seen as residing. Already there was a kind of Corporation formed inside the general body of enfranchised inhabitants; and this was not a direct outcome of the charters. These had merely incorporated the town in the rudimentary sense of combining into a privileged community the whole of the inhabitants, without exception. The charter of Fitz-Hamon conveys 'omnibus meis hominibus de Burford' the right to have a Gild Merchant. In the middle of the 1200's there were hardly more than a hundred free inhabitants of Burford and all would be members of the Gild; but before long there would, inevitably, have been some movement towards limiting Gild privileges by imposing an entrance fee or some other qualification. Whether in the 1200's the Curia Burgensium was (as we know it to have been later) co-extensive with a limited Gild we have no actual evidence. But since the Burgess Court appears, in the middle of that century, as a body acting officially and using the Common Seal, and since the only body called into existence by the charters was the Gild, the two may probably be identified. For one thing, the description 'burgensis', which was later to be the official title of a member of the Corporation, was beginning to have a special application. Ordinary owners of burgage tenements, were, now, described as 'liberi tenentes'; and, by 1314, 'burgenses' are the persons, thirteen in number, who, by the use of the Common Seal, act as the town.

We may have a glimpse of the chief officer of this body when, in an Inquisition of 1294, one of the jurors is Robertus le Maior. The head of the established Corporation of a later date was always called the Alderman. But during the 1200's such titles were not very rigid, and the chief officer of Burford may occasionally have been called the Mayor. One William le Maryschal or le Mareschal de Burford

¹ The ancient Common Seal is quite likely to be the one here referred to; for Mr. St. John Hope dates it *circa* 1250.

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

appears in various documents; he may have been the officer whose title later on was that of Seneschal or Steward. The Bailiffs, of whom there were two, were, by this time, coming to be regarded as officers of the town; but actually they were still manorial officers. It is evident that no branch of town affairs was, yet, in the hands of the Corporation, except as agent for the lord of the manor. There is, however, a single document of this period which did for a short time provide for a revenue to be paid to, and administered by, men of the town without responsibility to the lord of the manor. In 1322, the bridge over the river having fallen into disrepair, Edward II issued, at the instance of Hugh le Despenser, Letters Patent addressed '*probis hominibus de Bureford*', granting them the right to levy tolls for a period of three years on all merchandise passing over the bridge for sale. Again, in the Hundred Rolls the town of Burford appears as claiming the important liberty of the return of writs. This was, in truth, put forward at a time (the close of the long reign of Henry III) when the country was full of encroachments on Crown rights; the claim is mentioned in the Rolls only among those unwarrantably assumed; and there is no trace in Burford at any time of its having been carried into effect. But the point for us here is that it was made. No clause in the charters would for a moment justify it. The Corporate entity of the Burgesses was strong enough for their body to conceive of rights as coming to them, so to speak, automatically; they acted on occasion just as if they were the chartered incorporation of a town. That is in fact the nature of the whole evolution of the, so called, Corporation of Burford.

The opening of the series of Burford Records, preserved in the town itself, marks the second period of its history. These stand, of course, for a more conscious spirit at work. Yet only the smallest portion of them is, strictly, municipal records—of over four hundred documents (with some thirty volumes of accounts and memoranda kept during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries) only two fragments of a book belonging to the years 1596, 1597 and 1598; a thin volume of the sixteenth century; a roll of 1605; a copy of a judgment of the Court of Exchequer in 1620 concerning Burford liberties; a mass of papers relating to the Royal Commission in 1738 and a subsequent Chancery suit, are municipal records. All the rest are concerned with the administration of certain properties,

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

chiefly for charitable purposes; and, interesting as these are, their character partakes more of the Church-warden's accounts of a village than the muniments of a town. We are now in the most prosperous period of the Cotswold country—the great period of the English wool trade. At Burford, as elsewhere, much of this wealth was given to the service of religion—the building and adornment of the church, the foundation and endowment of chantry chapels, and the relief of the poor. Some of these funds came directly to the Gild, as such, for the maintenance of its chapel and priest and the welfare of its members. Indirectly, partial responsibility for almost all of them would tend to come on the same body, partly because its continuity would secure the trusts, and partly because, in a small community, the men of standing who would naturally be sought as trustees would inevitably be members of the Gild.

But, beyond this matter of trusts and accounts, there is now sign of clearer corporate and borough life. The group of charters of this period marks, in two respects, the second stage of the town's life. The series of Letters Patent of Confirmation, of which it is composed, is homogeneous, and it is continuous. The Letters Patent of Edward III, obtained in 1351, are followed by similar Confirmations purchased from the Chancery at the beginning of each succeeding reign (except that of Richard III) up to and including that of James I, though two of the series—the Letters Patent of Henry V and Elizabeth—are now missing. The corpus of the Letters is the same throughout; each document in turn recites the two charters of Henry II. Recital of the charters of Henry II bestowed no more, indeed, than the set of franchises of the earliest period. There is no apparent questioning of the sufficiency of the grants. Yet the making of a regular effort to maintain them means that the burgensic body must have had a new conception of its responsibility. We have left behind the indeterminateness which had returned from the first royal confirmations to a belated manorial confirmation; and had also allowed the town to remain outside the movement of the boroughs in general during the thirteenth century. Moreover the existence of a distinct body, within the general body of inhabitants, each member of which is a 'Burgess', is now clear. So also, now, is the identification of the Burgensic body with the Gild. But of the work done by the Burgesses at this time no book of record, or fragment of book, remains.

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

At the very outset of the 1500's, and to the most superficial survey, a change is apparent. Documents are far more numerous, and they include, also, a new class of record. The Corporation, too, has now reached full development; it consists of an Alderman, a Steward, and a number of Burgesses—usually fourteen or fifteen. The Alderman seems to have held office for life. The Steward was the second officer of the Corporation, and he also appears to have held office for an indefinite time. Minor officers are the town clerk, the serjeant, the constables, and the wardsmen. The town clerk was appointed by the Corporation; the constables and the wardsmen, on the other hand, retained much of the character of manorial officials. Ale-tasters and clerks of the market are found on the list of Burgesses in 1590. The general body of Burgesses retained, as did its chief officers, the marks of its Gild origin. It was constituted by close election within the body, and new members paid an entrance fee of 20s.

The character of the Bailiffs (originally, of course, agents for the lord of the manor) is seen to have changed. They are appointed still by the lord; in 1546, when the manor of Burford was in the hands of the Crown, we have this entry: 'and thereon the bailiffs aforesaid came and placed their offices in the hands of the King on which the Seneschal of the King elected in their places Robert Payne and William Hewys to perform the duties in the proper way and to perform the duties in the proper way and to perform them for one year and they took the oath.' But the meaning of this formal appointment seems to have become entirely obscured; throughout the 1500's the Bailiff's office appears to be wholly identified with the interests of the Burgesses. Of this body—of the Bailiffs, Alderman and Burgesses acting as the town authority—the ample documents of the 1500's give us full view. They formed the Borough Court which, like all Borough Courts, was at once judicial and executive. As a court of law it had cognisance of civil actions involving sums of money less than 40s., and of criminal cases as a court of first instance. Of the civil cases the greater number were actions for debt, but there were also actions for detention of goods and for valuation of goods of which the price had been disputed. Actions are frequently entered by or against persons not of the town, and sometimes not of the immediate neighbourhood. There are cases of litigants from as far away as Wiltshire and Berkshire, and the more distant parts of Gloucester-

shire. In several instances both litigants are non-residents; but, presumably, in all these cases the matter of dispute had arisen in Burford, often either at the market or the Fairs. The criminal cases recorded are few. There are two charges of assault, or 'bloodshed', each of which ended in the taking of bail to keep the peace. One case of petty larceny occurs, the prisoner, a woman, being expelled from the town by the Court on pain of a whipping if she should be brought before the Court again. There is also a case of trespass. The single case of more serious nature is a charge of sheep-stealing. In this Court the Alderman, Steward and Burgesses sat with the Bailiffs. The Bailiffs were certainly, in judicial matters, the executive of the town. They were responsible for the stocks and pillory. And it was to the Bailiff's custody that prisoners sentenced at Assizes in Burford were committed by the Judges. On the other hand, in the Court as a burghal executive—in assessments for the Crown Subsidies, as well as assessments for robberies charged upon the town, and assessments for internal affairs such as the repair of the church—the Burgesses acted without the Bailiffs. Again, when, in 1557, deeds of sale of Burford houses begin to be recorded, the record appears, not in the Court Book but in the Burgesses' Memorandum Book.

In this Memorandum Book there appears, too, about 1560, an entry which shows on the part of the Burgesses a conscious wish for definition of their powers—a definition is drawn up for the Burgesses, by lawyers of the time, of the meaning of the phrase 'sac and soc and toll and theam and infangenthef' in the first charter of Henry II. Reason for this sudden questioning is to be found in national events in the middle of the sixteenth century. The Burgess body, as has already been said, owed its existence to the erection, by the earliest charters, of a Gild; and its corporate entity had been assured more by the administration of Gild affairs than by its association with a Court of which the essence resided in the Bailiffs. Now national events were to strike at this continuity. The first result of the Reformation on local life need not concern us much here; the Hospital of St. John, the sole religious foundation in Burford, was, as has been said, insignificant, possessing no more property in the town than a house or two and some closes. But a further Act of Confiscation brought to Burford a severe shock. This was the Act of Edward VI dissolving the Gilds and Chantries and alienating their possessions

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

to the Crown. The Fellowship of the Alderman, Steward and Burgesses of Burford had, indeed, passed far beyond its Gild origin; it was not now a Gild within the meaning of the Act—a body existing solely for mutual benevolence, the maintenance of a chapel, and the observance of obits. Yet there was hardly a single piece of its property which was not held, so to speak, on Gild terms; that is to say, which did not impose on the Fellowship, as a condition of holding the property, the duty of observing an anniversary, of paying a priest for the saying of memorial Masses, or at least of making some annual payment for the upkeep of lights or other accessories of Church services—all classed by this Act as superstitious. Even *Poole's Lands*, given as they had been for the benefit of the Corporation and the maintenance of its charters, were subject to the direction that the people in the *Alms-houses*, who received a small weekly dole, should pray for the souls of Thomas Poole and his wife; and that phrase brought the bequest under the Act. As result, the Burgesses now found themselves stripped of all that property the administration of which had provided their most continuous and important public activity. Here, then, is the explanation of the appearance of the inquiry as to the sac and soc phrase. The Burgesses, finding nothing of their Gild property left, felt new concern for their sphere in the Borough Court.

But though the Burgesses thus turned attention to their rights in the Borough Court, they did not mentally distinguish between the new duties and the old. Through no fault of theirs the Charity Lands had been taken. Yet they set to work for recovery of them. In 1567 efforts were made by the Court of Exchequer to claim a few pieces of property in Burford that had escaped the earliest confiscation. These efforts were unsuccessful; the claimed pieces remained in the hands of local feoffees, and some of them formed part of the *Grammar School* Foundation of 1571. Meanwhile the Burgesses had been subscribing for the re-purchase, from persons named Typper and Dawe, of the bulk of the Lands which now had been sold to these men by the Crown. In 1598 this purchase was completed, and in 1599, in each group of the Charities, the series of leases and covenants, broken in the middle of the century, begins again. The charities were re-established, the houses, which were now in bad condition, being leased, not to single occupiers, but in groups to

prominent Burgesses. The sums received from the lessees for the Charities were, indeed, small. But anything was better than the complete suspension of the past forty years had been; the lessees had, too, to lay out much capital in repairs and wait for its return. It has to be remembered, also, that the men who found the money for the purchase from Typper and Dawe might have regarded the transaction as a private investment. Or they might have founded the Charities anew, in their own names, instead of carrying on the former foundations. They carried the business through as though it were a public duty.

It had never, so far, occurred to the Burgesses to question the efficacy of their charters. Throughout the sixteenth century they had continued to obtain, from the Chancery, Letters Patent of Administration which merely repeated, without attempting to expand or give new definition to, the charters of Henry II. Their sense of security, on the other hand, is shown by a large vellum roll dated January, 1605-1606, 'The Auncyante Ordynaunces Rules Constytucions and customs of the Corporacion and Fellowshippe of the Burgesses of this Towne and Burroughe of Burfford'. This nowhere speaks of any previous document of the same kind, and nowhere quotes an old rule. Yet the ordinances of this roll are not those of the town corporate, an entity of the realm and responsible to the laws of the realm. They are the rules of a body assisting the chief officers of the borough in the maintenance of peace and the administration of the law; its relation to the Crown subsisting in the fact that these officers were officials of the Crown—'The Prynce's chiefe officers of this saide Towne' (Article 2). The body is a close one, self-electing (Article 20), and its members are responsible to no one but fellow-members for the discharge of their duties (Articles 7, 16, 17, 18); punishment for breach of the Rules is inflicted by the Fellowship, and fines and fees are paid into a common fund disposable for purposes of the Fellowship (Article 18). The Gild tradition is present, strongly; as for instance in Article 6 forbidding members to 'procure or ingrosse or cause to be procured or ingrossed' from other members houses, lands, or anything 'that is parte or parcell of their lyvinge'; in Articles 8 and 9, concerning the relief of poor and aged members of the Fellowship and the attendance of members at the funeral of one of them; and Articles 10 and 20, providing for reform of the heavy charges which

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

had fallen on the Burgesses and Bailiffs for feasting the brethren at their elections. At no point are the Burgesses described as responsible to the townspeople, or as exercising functions on their behalf. The elected officers are responsible to the Fellowship, and modifications of their duties are made on the vote of the Fellowship alone. None of the Rules applies to any inhabitant of the borough other than members of the Fellowship, and no control of the borough is contemplated except in administration of the common law by the Crown's officers.

Now it is precisely in the fact that the chief officers of the borough are thus spoken of as the Crown's officers that we discover the Burgesses' view of their position. For the Roll of 1605-1616 is at once a correct interpretation of the charters, as it professes to be, and a completely mistaken deduction from them. The constitution of the Gild was right and proper. But when the chief officers of the town were described as 'the Prynce's chiefe officers' the Burgesses were being misled by the Crown's tenure of the manor of Burford into supposing that their position was as independent of intermediate lordship as a fully chartered borough held at fee-farm from the Crown.

To understand the blow that was about to fall on the town, it is necessary to have in mind the past relations between Burford and its manorial lords. As has been already said, from the time when it became an appanage of the Honour of Gloucester, Burford had been an unimportant item in the possessions of a series of great lords, none of whom had resided in or near the place. Though the agricultural part of the manor had often been in the hands of tenants, the town had nearly always remained in the direct holding of the chief lord. The inevitable result of this was that the Burgesses, advancing in importance and capability and beginning to take more upon themselves on behalf of the town, had been confronted by no very strict checks from manorial supremacy. Associated with the work of the Borough Court and with the supervision of the market, they would gradually, perhaps even unconsciously, tend to regard these as their own. The way in which the interests of the Bailiffs came to be identified with the town, rather than with the lord of the manor, is a distinct sign of this; and when, at the end of the fifteenth century the manor passed into the hands of the Crown, the encroachment on the manorial rights must have been hastened. Records of that century show that in

almost every department the Burgesses were in effective occupation of what did not belong to them. The Bailiffs, excused from office, pay their fine to the Burgesses: the Borough Court profits are allotted to the Clerk of the Court at his remuneration: the Burgesses let the stalls in the market and fix the market tolls. They even go so far, in one instance, as to deal with the waste inside the town, levying fines on the inhabitants of *Sheep Street* for the sheep-pens on the open spaces before their houses. Under a remote manorial control, sources of profit, such as these, which never had been held at a rent from the lord, but had at one time been paid to him directly, had found their way to the Common Box of the Burgesses.

The state of things under which this (and the Burgesses' confusion between the accident of the Crown holding their manor and their being a borough responsible only to the Crown) had been possible was now to end. In 1598 the Crown alienated the town and manor of Burford by sale to Sir John Fortescue, Chancellor of the Exchequer under Queen Elizabeth. But Fortescue, again, had been too great a lord to have effect on the place; his chief seat was in Buckinghamshire, and Burford having no mansion, he did not concern himself, personally, with it. His executors, however, sold the town and manor, in 1617, to Sir Lawrence Tanfield. Tanfield, rich enough to build a great house and wishing to add to his importance by acquiring the lordship of the town, came here to live; and became the first resident lord of the manor Burford had known since the Norman Conquest. Such a change must, in any case, have brought about difficulties in a place where the power of the Burgesses was, so largely, the result of want of manorial control. But it was desperately unfortunate for Burford that the change came with Tanfield. Corrupt and avaricious in public life, he was grasping and overbearing as a landlord. He was not likely to be gentle to rights which had grown up by usage merely. Of his origin little is known. Coming of a family belonging to Gayton in Northamptonshire, he is said to have been born at Burford, the son of Robert Tanfield. But, if so, his father must have been a poor and obscure man, for his name is not in any of the Subsidy lists, much less on any list of Burgesses or principal parishioners. However, Lawrence Tanfield, entered at the Inner Temple in 1569, had by 1584 come to sufficient standing to be elected to Parliament for the borough of *New Woodstock*. He was married, too, to Elizabeth

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

Symondes, niece of the great Sir Harry Lee, Ranger of *Woodstock Park*. In 1605, Tanfield was raised to the Bench of Judges, and in 1607 he became Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Within two years of Tanfield's purchase of the lordship and the town and manor of Burford, the Burgesses, in the persons of six of their number, were put on their defence in the Court of Exchequer, by a writ of Quo Warranto, on the charge of usurping liberties and privileges to which they had no title. Tanfield's name does not appear, the proceedings were instituted on information lodged by the Attorney General. But there can be little doubt that Tanfield set the case in motion. There was, firstly, no particular reason why the Burgesses' position should have been called to question just then, except for the coming of a new lord of the manor; secondly, there is evidence, in connection with Tanfield's other Oxfordshire manor—of *Great Tew*—that he was grasping as a landlord; thirdly, local tradition has pointed always, since this time, to Tanfield as the cause of Burford's loss of liberties. His name hardly could appear in the case; he, as Chief Baron of the Exchequer, was the presiding Judge in the Court before which it came. The trial began on June 17, 1620, and judgment was given by degrees, the final points not being settled till a year later. A transcript of the judgments is among the Burford Records. It sets forth that, on an information lodged by the Attorney General, William Taylor, William Bartholomew, Simon Simons, Leonard Mills, Thomas Silvester and John Hunt, and other inhabitants of the town and manor of Burford were charged with exercising without warrant or royal grant the following liberties, privileges and franchises:

- (i) The holding of a weekly market on Saturdays;
- (ii) The holding of two annual fairs, *viz.*, one on the feast of St. John the Baptist and one on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, or Holyrood Day;
- (iii) The taking of picage and stallage at the market and fairs and the exercising of other jurisdiction therein;
- (iv) The levying of toll on goods exposed for sale;
- (v) The right to felons' goods and chattels;
- (vi) The right to waifs and strays;
- (vii) The right to appoint a Seneschal of the town;
- (viii) The right to appoint a Deputy Alderman;
- (ix) The right to remove officials from their offices;

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

- (x) The right to hold a Borough Court every three weeks, and convert to the use of the defendants all profits of the Court;
- (xi) The right to try in that Court all cases involving a sum of less than 40s.; to administer oaths in the hearing of cases and to examine witnesses on oath;
- (xii) The right to make statutes and by-laws and to fine or imprison persons for breaches thereof;
- (xiii) The right to put persons on oath to keep the by-laws.

Some of these impeached privileges were not defended at all by the Burgesses. Whether this was purposed or accidental does not appear. But the omitted ones—the right to appoint a Deputy Alderman, the power to administer oaths to witnesses in the Borough Court and to examine them on oath, the right to imprison for breaches of the by-laws, and the right to put persons on oath to keep the by-laws—were forthwith seized into the hands of the Crown. On the other points the defence set up was twofold, consisting first of the import of the Letters Patent of Edward III, and secondly of the plea that the Bailiffs, Alderman and Burgesses had exercised these franchises from time of which the memory of man ran not to the contrary. That last—the plea of prescription—was referred to a jury. It naturally would not stand, and the privileges claimed under it—the Saturday market, the two annual Fairs, and the tolls and stallage of the market and Fairs—were, in their turn, seized into the hands of the Crown. The plea of the Charter of Edward III was dismissed by the Court itself. At this verdict, again, we cannot be surprised. As has been shown, the Burgesses had never even attempted to obtain a charter amplifying or rendering more precise their rudimentary first grants (of Henry II) from the Crown. Their plea was bound to fail; because no clause in any charter they held conferred on them any right except as men of a manor. In Henry II's first charter they are '*homines Willelmi comitis Glocestrie de Boreford*'. and in the second they are '*liberi burgenses ville comitis Willelmi de Bureford*'. So the remaining privileges—the right to waifs and strays, the right to elect a Seneschal or Steward, the right to hold a Borough Court, the making of ordinances and by-laws and imposing fines for breach of them—also were seized into the hands of the Crown, and the Burgesses were inhibited from use of them.

The disaster was complete. From this time on Burford has not



THE GEORGE INN YARD



NORTH WEST VIEW OF THE CHURCH

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

even the shadow of a likeness to the great boroughs. The long series of Letters Patent from the Crown ends with those issued by the Chancery of James I; there are no more Borough Court Books, and no further Memorandum Books of importance. The Corporation would, indeed, now have ceased to exist had it not been for the buying back of the Charity Lands described earlier in this chapter. In control of these the Burgesses had just work enough to hold them together in some kind of continuance of public position. Yet even this remnant of authority was shortly to be challenged. In 1628 a Royal Commission, appointed under the Act 'concerning the Mis-Employment of Lands heretofore given to Charitable Uses', held an inquiry at Burford and made decrees intended to destroy the rule of the Burgesses over the Charities. Certain quit-rents to the Crown, for the confiscated Burford lands it had granted to Typper and Dawe, and Typper and Dawe had resold to the Burgesses, had not been kept up. To make a long story short, the Commission's decrees are so plainly unfriendly to the Burgesses that we suspect, again, a Tanfield influence behind them. Tanfield himself died in 1625; but Lady Tanfield, who was almost as contentious, lived on at Burford till 1628. The decrees were drastic in re-constituting the charitable trusts over the heads of the Burgesses, and in terminating their complete control. The decrees fix the rents of the properties, order the rents to be used only for specific purposes, appoint a new body of trustees to include a number of members of county families of the neighbourhood, with only a limited representation from among the Burgesses.

National circumstances, however, a few years later did much towards obscuring the effects of the decrees. In a general way, the Civil War left extraordinarily little trace on Burford life; the place was, indeed, the scene of a skirmish or two, and of Cromwell's famous handling of the Levellers, which left its mark on our Register of Burials. But there are no signs of internal confusion or interruption of town affairs. Two reasons may be assigned for this. One is that the loss of borough privileges would remove any necessity for public decisions of policy or support of either side. The other is that Burford was then in the hands of a lord of the manor—William Lenthall, Speaker of the Long Parliament—likely to keep the town passive and opportunist in attitude. Indirectly, none the less, the Civil War must have affected these decrees of 1628. It was one thing to name county

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

gentlemen as Trustees for Burford Charities, it was quite another to secure their attendance at Trust meetings at a time when they had enough to do in looking after their own lands, if not their own heads. Consequently, although the names of the new, external trustees appear with all formality on the new leases of charity property, the detailed management reverted to the Corporation. In account books, whose entries run from 1602 to 1658, and from 1656 to 1737, the whole tenour is of management by the Corporation; no record appears of decisions taken by any meeting of persons outside Corporation members; and accounts are rendered by the Bailiffs to the Burgesses. Further, preserved in company with the series of Letters Patent of Confirmation, are two documents under the Great Seal of the Commonwealth. These restored some jurisdiction to the town, though not as a town. They are Commissions issued, the first in 1649 and the second in 1659, appointing the Bailiffs and Seneschal and two of the ancient Burgesses of Burford to be Justices of the Peace for the town, in company with William Lenthall (later, with John Lenthall, William's son, also), and to be responsible for the affairs of the town. These returned some semblance of the old activities of the Burgess body, and rendered less obvious the stripping away of their former authority.

Our next view of the remnant of the Corporation is again in a combination of the proceedings of a Royal Commission and a case in the High Court; and again the Lord of the Manor is setting the proceedings in motion. This time they concern the town charities alone, for no functions remain to the Burgesses to conflict with manorial rights. The Burgesses, now, are merely on trial for mismanagement of trust funds. John Lenthall seems to have discovered that a charity fund established by his grandfather, Speaker Lenthall, was in an unsatisfactory condition. In 1737 he brought before a vestry meeting a proposal to petition for a Royal Commission to investigate the Burford charities; and it was agreed that petition should be made by the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor. Lenthall and some other persons came to an agreement as to the costs of the petition, and the affair was put in the hands of a solicitor. The Corporation made up its mind to fight; it appears to have been indignant rather than apprehensive. But, to begin with, the Burgesses were not united; two or three were on Lenthall's side. Meetings of

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

the two parties were held at separate inns, each party claiming to speak for the Corporation. So slack had the Burgesses now become that they had neither an Alderman nor a Steward, hence it was open to either party to call its colloquings a meeting of the Corporation.

The Royal Commission sat in 1738. Two copies of its decrees are in the Burford Records. It found that the Bailiffs and Burgesses had usurped the sole management of funds in which other persons should have been joined with them; that they had mismanaged funds, in some cases having lost money by loans improperly made to members of their own body in unsound financial positions, in others having used money for purposes for which it had not been intended, in others again having omitted to put the money to any uses at all; that they had allowed charity property to fall into a scandalous state of disrepair, even where specific provisions had been made for the upkeep of the property; that they had allowed gross neglect at the *Grammar School*—the master was drawing the whole income himself and neither doing any work nor appointing an usher; further that, when the Commission was appointed the Burgesses had done all in their power to delay proceedings and to withhold evidence and that there was more than a suspicion that they had altered their books and made away with documents. Upon these findings, the Commission based their Orders. Lost money was to be refunded; damages were to be paid in some cases by the Bailiffs and Burgesses as a body, in other cases by individuals; the disposition of certain Charities was altered; and in almost every particular the absolute control of the Bailiffs and Burgesses was to cease, and the charities were to be managed in the future by either the Bailiffs and the churchwardens, or by the Burgesses and the churchwardens, the overseers of the poor being in some instances included also. Finally, strict arrangements were to be made for an annual rendering of accounts; a schedule of all documents in the possession of the Corporation was to be made (to prevent suppression of documents in the future); and a fresh body of trustees was nominated.

This looked like the end. If control of the charity lands went, the Corporation went with it; no other reason remained now for its existence. This the Burgesses realised, and they determined to challenge the Commission's Orders. So, in 1738, they instituted a suit in

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

the Court of Chancery—the Bailiffs and Burgesses of Burford Ex-ceptants *v.* Lenthall and others Respondents. Of this suit we have full information in the Burford Records. The case came on in 1742: judgment was delivered in May, 1743. On points of law it was an almost complete triumph for the Burgesses, who had contended that the last Commission had had no right to over-ride decisions of the 1628 Commission; that the Orders altered disposition of money in wills already proved; and that a Commission could not command restitution of money and payment of damages and costs. These legal objections the Burgesses established; and it seems, in face of that success, not to have troubled them at all that they had been morally condemned. Thus the Corporation found itself, for its last phase, more than ever secure in its hold upon that public money, which had always been the heart of its existence, and which for the past hundred years had been its sole responsibility. We may note again here how that hold had been re-established contrary to the obvious intentions of the Decrees of 1628—Decrees on which the Burgesses were now professedly leaning. Those Decrees had nominated a body of Trustees, whereas this 1738 contest had been throughout fought, not by the Trustees, but by the Bailiffs and Burgesses as such. It was, in fact, the core of this triumph of theirs, in 1743, that they had apparently established such control; some of the copies of the judgment seem to have been written out by individual Burgesses in the flush of victory, and they contain indexes of the charities, reiterating in the indexes the declaration ‘the management of this charity remains in the Bailiffs and Burgesses’. Supremacy which the Burgesses had acquired at the end of the 1500’s by the re-purchase of the Charity Lands, which they had lost under the Commission of 1628, and since had been regaining by usurpation, was now theirs by a legal judgment. Small wonder that, long as the judgment was, they enjoyed writing it out to tell those who should come after! Yet the evil-doing, which apparently troubled these scribes so little, remains upon record, too. The pleadings and depositions in the case leave no doubt open as to the carelessness, incompetence, favouritism, and at times the actual cheating, in management of the charity property. In fact, the moment at which the Corporation is seen with its legal hold most secure is, morally, the blackest of its existence. It was not appointing its officers; it was disunited and quarrelsome; it was com-

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

posed of petty tradesmen who held their meetings at inns and passed rules which are more those of a drinking club than of a Corporation. And, of a piece exactly with this public-house frequenting, had been a period of swelled head. Among the records is an Indenture of Agreement made in 1728, between the Bailiffs of that year, the Alderman, the Chamberlain, and six of the Burgesses, of the one part, and Richard Griffiths of the other part, which sets forth that Richard Griffiths is to receive the £25 a year of rent from *Poole's Lands*, and, if necessary, a capital sum of £10 apiece from each of the other parties to the agreement, in order to institute legal proceedings against the Tanfield judgment. If the whole proceeding were not outrageous (Richard Griffiths being the schoolmaster who presently was to be convicted of appropriating to his own use the whole of the *Grammar School* funds) there would be something tragic in Burford's incapacity to comprehend its relation to the Crown: for the plea the Burgesses propose now to use is that the market tolls, profits, and so on, never had been 'seized into the King's hands', but instead had been taken by the lord of the manor. Nothing, apparently, could ever have persuaded them that the Crown, holding these rights and dues merely as lord of the manor, sold them to the purchaser of the manor. Happily, this claim was never really set going; Richard Griffiths, in 1738, 'did privately withdraw himself from Burford and conceal himself in London until after the Return or Close of the Commission', and before the suit of 1742 he had become feeble-minded. Also probably, the pompousness of the inn-frequenting Burgesses was appeased sufficiently by the establishment of their control of the Charities.

A hundred years later, in 1822, the Burgesses are revealed to us again, in a Report of the Charity Commissioners for that year, as yet once more neglecting their trusteeship—losing rents, and allowing some of their members to use Trust property for private profit. As, one after the other, the charities come under review, the report of the Commissioners is almost monotonously the same. With few exceptions the houses were out of repair—one was actually a rubbish heap—and the rents were heavily in arrear. From 1805 to 1814 the office of clerk to the feoffees was held in conjunction with the office of treasurer to the Corporation, by one Waters: 'During that period no account was ever delivered by him to the feoffees; and on his death no

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

papers were found from which any account could be made out.' There are other irregularities; and, among them, the Commission draws attention to the fact that the body of Trustees, which by the constitution of the Trusts should never have fallen below the number of six, has dwindled to the person of one old man, the Hon. and Rev. Francis Knollis, Vicar of Burford. No notice of the warning was taken; and in 1826 Mr. Knollis died, and died intestate. The position then was that the whole of the charity property passed to Mr. Francis Knollis's heir-at-law—the Rev. James Knollis, Vicar of Penn in Buckinghamshire. Happily for Burford, Mr. Knollis was an upright man, whose one desire in the matter was to hand over the property to a new body of Trustees. But even this was not simple. Ultimately, petition was made to the Master of the Rolls; a draft list of new Trustees was by his order submitted to one of the Masters of Chancery, and from him authority to transfer was obtained. Throughout the correspondence over this matter there are proofs of carelessness in the administration of the Charities; tenants of the properties are almost all badly in arrears with their rent. The whole thing seems much in the spirit of the Trustees of the preceding century: with rents so heavily in arrears the School must have been inefficient, the poor unrelieved. Tradition was being maintained even to the point of one of the chief defaulters in 1822 being a member of the Corporation.

For the brief remainder of its history the Corporation is decent in behaviour; but practically it was dead. The Commissioners of 1822 record that, though there was an Alderman, there was no Steward, that there were only three Burgesses, and no meeting had been held for over six years. The setting up of a new body of Charity Trustees (after the muddle of 1826-7) had relegated the Corporation to that insignificance to which the 1628 Commission had, unsuccessfully, tried to reduce it. For a quarter of a century more the title of the Bailiffs, Alderman, and Burgesses of Burford remained to represent a survival. But the end came in 1861, and came in the incidental fashion that had marked our Corporation's whole career. The Act of Parliament which extinguished it was not primarily concerned with it, and is not identified with its name. The ancient title, with nearly eight hundred years of history, does not appear on the Index of the Public Statutes. In 1861 was passed the 'Act for confirming a

THE TOWN AND THE CORPORATION

Scheme of the Charity Commissioners for certain Charities in the Town and Parish of Burford in the County of Oxford'. In a single clause the Act confirms the Scheme 'as the same is set out in the Schedule to this Act'; of this Schedule the first sentence reads, 'The existing corporation of the alderman, steward, bailiffs, and burgesses of the Borough of Burford is hereby dissolved.'

CHAPTER VIII

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

Of life in Burford immediately before the opening of the 1800's a fairly clear picture can be obtained. In September, 1791, advertisements of Burford Races are almost of a column's length in *The Oxford Journal*, telling of an Ordinary on the first day at *The Bull* and the second day at *The George*, and of a ball on the last day of the Races. Of ladies' dresses at these parties we learn much from particulars of the contents of a trunk lost on the way back to Oxford in 1791. It contained 'a Sprigged Book Muslin Gown, a Blue Silk ditto; a White Satin Mode Cloak trimmed with lace; a White Lustring Petticoat with Painted Tiffany; a White Painted Sash, a Broad Pink Satin Ditto; a Green Mode Bonnett; a White Chip Dress Hat; some Feathers and Flowers'. There were a number of muslin caps also, plain and 'fancy', edged and not edged. On Sale in Burford was '*The Ladies' Own Memorandum Book*, for 1792, Embellished with Elegant Engravings of two Ladies in the Dress of 1791, and twelve of the most fashionable Head Dresses', happy possessors of it finding themselves informed fully as to 'New and Full Moons—Useful Market Tables—Table of Precedency Among Ladies—Poetical Answers to last year's Enigmas—New Enigmas—Charades, etc.—Answers to the Rebuses of last year—New Rebuses—Several Original Poetical Pieces—New Songs Sung at Vauxhall in 1791'.

In December of each year 'Mr. Clark' was presenting his compliments to the public of Burford with the news that his 'Ball for the young ladies educated by the Miss Pritchards' will be held at *The Bull Inn*, the following dances being performed—'the French Minuet with the new Graces, the much admired Minuet Deiga with Cotillions in the Present Taste, Country dances, etc., Tickets 3/6 each, Tea and Coffee included'. Some three years earlier, in August 1788, Fanny Burney, then in waiting on Queen Charlotte, had, with the King and the Queen, stopped to change post-horses on the way from Cheltenham to London, at Burford—stopped long enough for an

interview with her friend Mrs. Gast. Fanny Burney's world seems astoundingly far from our world of to-day, none-the-less it is not at all further than are the glimpses we have of the minds of Miss Pritchard's young ladies and the interests and events in which they and their parents had part. In the newspapers they read, most of the advertisement space is given to State Lotteries, Turnpike Road regulations, Inoculation Houses, and notices of Venison Feasts, Spinning Feasts, Common Land Enclosures, with inquiries for 'eloping apprentices', and for men and women servants all of whom 'must have had smallpox'. In April 1793, a cock-fight is held 'at Mr. Joseph Stratford's at the *White Horse Inn* in Burford, betwixt the Gentlemen of Gloucestershire and the Gentlemen of Oxfordshire, for Five Guineas the Battle and Twenty the odd Battle. To go to Pit at Ten o'clock and to fight Five Battles before Dinner—Dinner on Table at One o'clock'. Tayton, of the *Rose and Crown Inn*, Upton, is at this time Cock Feeder for Oxfordshire and Cockings are held at his house.

In September, 1791, the inhabitants of Burford give public notice that the Bridge over the river Windrush between the two parishes of Burford and *Fulbrook* has undergone the most thorough repair. In 1792, and succeeding years, notice is also given that 'Burford new Fair' will be held the last Saturday in April 'for all sorts of Merchandise and for Corn and Cattle. Toll free'. An Ox is roasted. However satisfactory to ourselves, announcements of this kind apparently were not so pleasing to our neighbours; for in September, 1797, we read that *The Oxford Journal* is 'desired to contradict a paragraph which appeared in *The General Evening Post* of the eighteenth instant asserting that the Bridge over the river Windrush between Burford and *Fulbrook* was blown up and the road rendered impassable. It is imagined this paragraph, which is totally void of foundation, was inserted to prevent a quantity of cheese being brought to Burford Fair on Monday next'.

In May, 1794, Burford Enclosure Act was advertised, and in 1795 it became law. In connection with that I have lighted on an advertisement that possesses a double interest—'June 25th, 1794. To be sold by private contract—Lot I, Several Tenements in good Repair situated on the West Side of the *High Street*, commonly called *Deene's College*. Lot II, Twelve Acres of Arable Land lying dis-

persed over the Common Field of Burford'. Down to the day on which I write tradition has maintained persistently that the name of the Court that was 'immediately below Foster and Son's motor-garage, and approached by perhaps the most striking of Burford archways, is 'the College'. No definite basis for the theory has been found, but in this advertisement we have not only the word 'college' in use a century and a quarter ago, but we have the addition of a proper name that gives it further actuality. A glimpse of the Burford Workhouse in 1794 is given us by an advertisement, in December of that year for a man and his wife to superintend it 'such persons to be capable of carrying on some kind of Trade either in the Woolen, Worsted, Sacking, or Carpeting Line'. For twenty years on from this date the Parish Register has frequent entries of burials 'from the Workhouse'. It stood then in *Sheep Street*. The Register has, also, at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, several entries of the deaths of infants from 'Sworn Lands', or as it should be, 'Sworn Lays Great House'. In November 1801 this is still advertised as possessing the advantage of 'belonging to no Parish'. Its address then was 'James Hart, Sworn Lays Great House near Burford Oxfordshire'. Part of the ruin of this house was in existence until 1930; but its ill repute had left it unoccupied for long.

Burford Parish Register for 1800 contains entries of the deaths of 'a Pauper', 'a Stranger', 'Stranger from the lodging house', 'Unknown', 'a Traveller', 'a Soldier', 'Soldier's child'. The last of these reminds us of the fact that Burford from 1795 till well into the 1800's lay heavily under the burden of war. Everywhere recruits are being sought—'All bringers of recruits shall receive One Guinea Reward. Money down immediately'; and we read, March 1795, 'Wanted immediately by the Parish of Burford Two Able-Bodied Men to serve in his Majesty's Navy. Any person disposed to engage with the said Parish will receive a Handsome Bounty and every other encouragement by applying to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the same.' The dearth of bread, in relation to wages, is terrible. In July, 1795, the farmers of our district convene a meeting in Burford at which they resolve that they will in future sell their corn to 'mealmen and bakers' only, not to merchants or buyers from a distance. The Government institutes a 'standard loaf', and at the end of the century

no bread may be exposed for sale, anywhere in Oxfordshire, that has not been baked twenty-four hours previously.

The winters of 1796 and 1798-9 are extremely severe; poverty is desperate and much incendiarism is abroad. Some of the news items are horrible; for instance in January, 1798, is noted, without comment, that John Castle of Fulbrook, seen shooting Farmer Secker's pigeons, is chased into the river Windrush and drowned; poaching affrays in Wychwood are constant. Of the war, Burford inhabitants are told 'The Short question is Shall we be trampled underfoot by France?' Contributions to military expenses are begged for from every class—College servants and villagers taking up collections for 'the exigences of the State', in response to the question, 'Shall we continue to exist as a great, free, and respectable nation, or permit our Gallic foes to take possession of our Country?'

The appearance of Burford in the neighbourhood of the bridge, at the opening of the 1800's, is familiar to some number of persons to-day through an engraving, from a drawing by G. Shepherd for 'The Antiquarian Itinerary'. In the foreground of the picture, all about *Ladyham* and where the twin bridge houses stand to-day, were very large sheds and warehouses fronted with drying-racks. Exactly what was comprised in this group is to be learned from an advertisement in *The Oxford Journal* for December 14th 1811: 'To be sold by private contract a capital Mansion and Tannery in Burford, in complete repair, in the occupation of Messrs. Thomas and James Ansell, and now in full employ. The Mansion is a very desirable residence consisting of three parlours, hall, kitchens, ten sleeping rooms, attics, and every other suitable and convenient apartments for the accommodation of a large family; with a good coach-house, excellent stabling and lofts over and three tenements adjoining. The tannery is an old-established concern, and consists of a very large and extensive yard close to the river Windrush; comprising one hundred and fifty-six tan pits, one glue pit, six grainers or soakes, bark house, leather house, a two-horse bark mill able to grind from 30 cwt. to 2 tons of bark per day, and every convenience for carrying on a large and lucrative trade'. A week before the appearance of this advertisement notice had been given that the partnership, hitherto existing, between Thomas Ansell and James Ansell of Burford, tanners, was dissolved by mutual consent.

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

In 1800, John Lenthall was at *The Priory*, planning the reconstruction of his house, and the diversion of the coach-road from its passage through the Priory woods.¹ The Hon. Francis Knollis was vicar. John Stevens² was at *The Bull Inn*; Sarah Clare was hostess at *The George*; the *Rose and Crown* 'in good business' was in the occupation of Ann White, widow; Thomas Young was post-master; the gardens at *Westhall Hill* were worked by a nurseryman, Willis by name; Miss Pritchard reigned still at the young ladies' boarding-school, though she was to be succeeded very soon by a Mrs. Steele; Robert Henry Pytt with his wife and family lived in *The Great House* where afterwards was Dr. Cooke; a 'Mr. Hunt surgeon son of James Hunt surgeon' with his wife was in a house on *Church Green*, where the *Church Schools* are now; a number of Chavasses were here; and the Parish Register in August, 1806, gives the burial of 'Richard Swancott surgeon'. Mr. John Arkell was a Burgess and soapboiler by trade. Mr. William Chavasse had died in 1794, but Pye Chavasse was in Burford, and, with Benjamin Waters, much to the fore. The bailiffs for 1799 were Pye Chavasse and William Turner, for 1800 Mr. Benjamin Waters and Mr. John Tuckwell, for 1801 Mr. Benjamin Waters and Pye Chavasse, for 1802 John Tuckwell and Mr. Benjamin Waters. Ansells we have just seen at *Ladyham*, and Mr. Edward Ansell and his wife lived at *Fulbrook*.³

Burford in 1801⁴ must have been an overcrowded place, as it had then fifteen hundred inhabitants. The increase in population was due, no doubt, to the great amount of traffic actually passing through the town (before the making of the road along the top in 1812) many trades here being connected with the coaches. The town possessed, at that time, a periwig maker, a sheriff's officer, four or five paper makers, brushes makers, sawyers, curriers, dyers, flaxweaver, broker, gunmaker, umbrella maker, ropemakers, garter maker, engine driver,

¹ In April 1808 *The Oxford Journal* advertises a sale of furniture at *The Priory*, Burford, 'on account of the intended alterations and repairs'.

² John Stevens died in July, 1820, having been 'nearly thirty years master of *The Bull Inn*'.

³ Many Ansells were in the district at this date. On June 12th, 1816 we read 'The Lord Chancellor has been pleased to appoint John Jordan Ansell, Esq., of Burford, in this County, a Master Extraordinary in the High Court of Chancery'.

⁴ 1801 was the hey-day of the English Coaching system. At that date thirty-nine main line coaches passed through Burford every twenty-four hours.

traveller's weaver, maltsters, drill manufacturers, brazier, fellmonger, collar maker, cordwainer, watchmaker, harness maker (besides the saddlers), waggoners, chandlers, basket maker, hosier, sievemaking, watchman, three turnpikekeepers, hatter, 'general weaver', straw manufacturer, 'musician', soapboiler—and these were in addition to the trades and professions that remain with us today, such as tanners, glovers, masons, carpenters, builders, saddlers, tinsmiths, surgeons, solicitors, and the storekeepers. In 1801, too, the boys' boarding and day school, kept by Mr. Thomas Huntley, must have been flourishing, as twelve years later *The Oxford Journal* has this notice: 'For sale, premises, well watered, in the most healthy part of Burford, being on the Hill, at the upper end of the town, commanding an extensive prospect for many miles round, and are remarkably well-situated for a School, for which use it has been occupied by Mr. Thomas Huntley for upwards of fifty years.' This house was at the summit of the *High Street* hill, on the east side, where a one-storey cottage now stands. The girls' boarding school of the Misses Pritchard, soon to be Mrs. Steele's, and after Mrs. Steele Mrs. Galloway's, was on *Church Green*, almost certainly in the house which stood at the corner between the *Grammar School* and the churchyard—the house and garden that, coming up to the back of the Price tomb, prevented this from being set further from the churchyard path (the asphalted footpath from *Lawrence Lane* to *Church Green* is quite modern, of course), and so necessitated the curious curve in the front railings of that grave.

The tombstones with raised square or bolster-shaped tops in the churchyard could tell much of the close relations between Burford and *Wychwood Forest* at this time; some of the tombs were used regularly by poachers as hiding-places for venison. Till almost the middle of the century poaching was general. Charles East¹ remembered, as a boy, seeing half-a-dozen deer hanging in a *Fulbrook* back kitchen; and at that time venison was often on sale in the town at twopence and threepence the pound. The forest, indeed, held a large place in Burford life at this time. Its open woodland was three thousand acres. Arthur Young was already arguing for its enclosure, as well as for suppression of the Forest Fair; but the Forest was to remain unenclosed, and the Fair was to flourish, for another fifty years.² The last of the Fettiplaces to inhabit the Mansion at *Swin-*

¹ Living in Burford till 1934.

² The last Forest Fair was held in 1855.

brook, Richard Georges Fettiplace,¹ who died at *The Bull Inn*, Burford, on the evening of May 21, 1806, was one of the three Forest Verderers. In his lifetime the Fair had not swollen to the dimensions it was to reach between 1824 and 1850. Yet, in 1806, it was being attended by ten thousand persons. The Forest Fair was held always on the Wednesday after Witney Feast.² Mid-September mellows our Cotswold stone, emblazons our hedgerows, and bathes the heaped rickyards in a haze of gold. At this crown of the year nature decks the Cotswold stage gloriously for the harvest pageant. Small wonder that the instinct of our countryside was to make festival at this season. During the Fair very little work was done on the farms, or in the villages within twenty miles; for it served not only as a merry-making, but, for many of the persons attending it, as a yearly shopping place for cloth, hosiery, and flannels, and particularly for hand-spun linens.

In 1812 main line coaches ceased coming through Burford itself. Henceforth they kept to the road at the top, and from this time, till coaches ceased running, passengers for Burford were put out at the top of the hill and walked down.³ Yet for years after there continued to be a very great amount of wheeled traffic through the town—chaises, waggons of all kinds, and one coach to London starting from Burford itself.⁴ In 1814 John Lenthall, as had been said, moved the old Burford to Cirencester coach-road from the Priory woods to where it now runs—past the *Cottage Hospital* as a continuation of *Sheep Street*. He was a person prone to taking thought for the morrow, and he may have committed himself to altering the road, before the main coaches took to the ridge. On the other hand, he may well have considered that the traffic through the town which remained

¹ Not, as has been stated, 'Charles Fettiplace'. That confusion has arisen, probably from the fact that Charles Fettiplace, of South Lawn Lodge, died later in the same year. In August, 1811, the Swinbrook estate was purchased by the first Lord Redesdale from Thyne Howe Gwynne, Esq. and Miss Arabella Georges.

² Witney Feast is the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin on Sept. 8th.

³ My husband's uncle, Dr. Wace, the late Dean of Canterbury, coming to the Vicarage here, as Mr. Joyce's pupil in 1851, was put out of the coach at *The Bird-in-Hand*, and walked down with his luggage following on a barrow.

⁴ On May 12th, 1821, *The Oxford Journal* gives notice of a Burford-London coach being set up in Burford—'the coach leaves Burford every morning, except Sundays, at 6, arriving at London at 4 in the morning. Leaves White Horse, Fetter Lane, at 8 in the morning and arrives at Burford at 6. R. Coster and W. B. Lardner and Co.'

was enough to justify his plan.¹ All that concerns me here is to remark that this road alteration, with the reconstruction of *The Priory*, must have kept him, in the last years of his life (he died in his seventieth year in 1820) much in the eye of the town. His heir, William John Lenthall, was in the 3rd (King's Own) Dragoon Guards,² where his father, at this time, had much ado to maintain him, the estate being now deeply mortgaged.

This William John Lenthall and his wife came to live at *The Priory* on John Lenthall's death, in December, 1820. They held out there for seven years—rather more—but at the end of 1828 they gave up. Their financial circumstances must have been depressing, and, probably their son, Frederick George, who was to die of a decline at Fulham Lodge, Middlesex, in January 1830, was already showing signs of a disease to which more than one of his Lenthall aunts at *The Priory* had succumbed. At any rate, in 1828 the Lenthall family and their pictures went from Burford³ (the auction of the pictures, at Christie's, was not till 1833). That year they sold *The Priory*; and, in 1830, it is advertised 'To be let, unfurnished; A tenant may have a six years' lease, if required; Apply to Mr. Price, solicitor, Burford'. No one then, or for approaching a century after, 'required' a lease for six years or six days; and this circumstance—of complete neglect and speedy decay—adds pathos to the Lenthalls' departure.

In May, 1826, the Rev. A. R. C. Dallas had come as curate-in-charge to Burford (the Vicar at the time, the Rev. William Birch, being non-resident). Mr. Dallas had fought, as an officer, in the Peninsular War, and he appears at times to have carried something like military methods into his ecclesiastical work. Allowing for this, however, his record in Burford is genuinely remarkable. His repairing and reseating of the Church is described later in this chapter. Here we need only remark that he found the place given over to drunkenness

¹ In 1833 Burford Tolls let for £310.

² On Monday se'nnight was married at Elloughton, Yorkshire, William Lenthall, Esq., of the 3rd or King's Own Dragoons, eldest son of John Lenthall, Esq., of Burford Priory, in this County, to Frances Mary, eldest daughter of the late Thomas Terry, Esq., of Beverley.'—*The Oxford Journal*, November 5th, 1808.

³ They went, Mr. and Mrs. William John Lenthall and their children, to Fulham Lodge. In after years their second, and only married son, Edmund Henry Lenthall, emigrated to Australia and died there in 1894. His eldest son, Walter Ellison Lenthall, returned to England in 1907, having succeeded to the *Besselsleigh* estate.

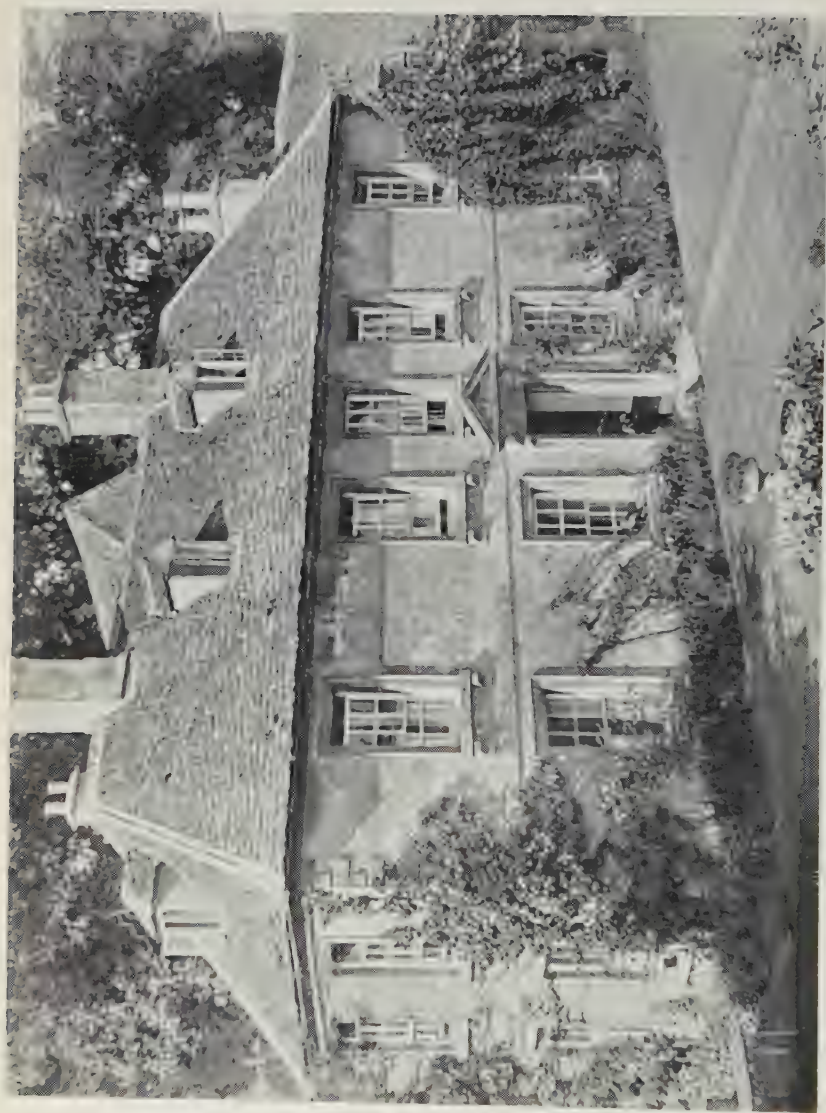
and fighting in the streets, and rent by feuds between the 'outward and inner wards'.¹ The first Sunday of his residence was Whit-Sunday, and Mr. Dállas found only himself and the parish clerk at morning service, all the rest of his parishioners being in *Wychwood*. (I have never heard the fact commented on that the custom of Burford's going to *Capp's Lodge* for the bucks was discontinued the very next year, 1827; but personally I am not surprised.) At Mr. Dallas's coming, all Burford shops were open on Sunday; within a few weeks he was in possession of a Sunday Closing resolution signed by sixty-three of the shopkeepers. In this connection, it is entertaining to think of the controversy that must have arisen between him and his clerk, John Banbury.² For Mr. Charles East could recall seeing Banbury twenty years after Mr. Dallas's time here, called out of morning service to attend to a customer at his shop (he was a clothier), and it was common knowledge, even then, that Banbury conducted most of his business on Sundays, returning always from Church to his kitchen full of customers. Nothing daunted by the experience at morning service on this first Sunday of his residence, Mr. Dallas announced the opening of a Sunday School. By the next week he had collected two hundred and fifty-three children, a number which he increased very shortly to four hundred and eleven. Further, he obtained allotments for the poor; drew up a scheme for Poor Relief; appointed five auditors to attend at the Workhouse to hear appeals; restored the Church; restored and re-opened the *Church Green Almsouses*; made the Workhouse more decent; established the Burford Friendly Institution; instituted District Visiting, a Night School, a Soup Kitchen, and the Harvest Blanket distribution. In 1832, cholera was bad in Burford, so bad that the place was startled into a repentance to which allusion is made in *The Life and Ministry of the Rev. A. R. C. Dallas* (Nisbet; 1872). Mr. Dallas had left Burford some time before this cholera visitation (he had, indeed, been here for eighteen months only); but a paragraph in the *Life* notes that the calamity had brought the town to share in his view of its wickedness.

¹ The 'outer ward' was the agricultural interest, the 'inner' the town and trading interest.

² John Banbury was born in 1782. He was Clerk of the Parish for twenty-two years. The Rev. John Fisher speaks of him as 'late Parish Clerk' in 1861, though he did not die till 1868.



THE VICARAGE, HIGH STREET (1672)



THE RECTORY, PRIORY LANE

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

In the year 1837 was born, in what had been the *George Inn*, Charles East, son of John East. John East had, then, lately signed an agreement with proprietor Stevens of the *Bull Hotel* that the *George* no longer should be used as an inn. The present shop with the barber's pole and the telephone exchange, together, had made *The George* bar, the bedrooms being above the arch and over the kitchens behind the arch, and the present *George Yard* being the stables. In Charles East's boyhood, he told me, postboys sat always, ready spurred, in *The Bull* archway; poachers abounded in *Wychwood*: the churchyard was the town playground; *Church Green* came up to the *Grammar School* east windows; and just off the Green *The Eight Bells Inn*, approachable by so many routes, was the 'sly-drinking' place of Burford.

Till the 1840's what now is the *Wesleyan Chapel* in *High Street* was a private house in the occupation of a Mr. James Chapman. At that time an ornamental stone vase stood upon each of the pilasters of the façade and two very large vases at the bottom of the flight of steps.¹ With its fine iron railing, which happily still remains, this house must have been imposing; its garden ran behind present houses to include all the land and glasshouses behind what is now Mr. Pratley's; a drive entered that garden from *Witney Street*. Inside it was divided, as the so-called *Great House* is divided still, more by panelings and partitions than by walls. The staircase was a noble one; in the basement was a large clock-work roasting jack; and tradition tells that the manservant of the house used, when drunk, to climb on to the roof and play his fiddle there. At Mr. Chapman's death, the property was bought by Bayliss, the *Sheep Street* basket maker, for £500. Much of the back of the house was pulled down, the small house now immediately above it (on the south) being built from some of the materials by a son of old John Banbury, Parish Clerk. Almost all the land was sold off; in 1849 the front portion of the building was converted by the Wesleyans to their uses as a chapel. The Wesleyans paid for the property only £450, and £150 of that sum they recovered by sales of the land. But some sellings, if only of fittings from the interior of the 'mansion', we may hope had been prior to this date. For the Bayliss name touches a soft spot in my heart. Bayliss's house is incorporated now in *Calendars*; and his son

¹ In 1849 these were bought by Lord Churchill for Cornbury Park.

it was who yearly wove little wicker supports and placed them beneath the swallows' nests under our eaves.

In 1852, when the Oxford to Worcester portion of the Great Western Railway was opened, Burford found itself apart from the line, not only by five miles of distance, but by a ridge of hill. This, as the town had been becoming more and more dependent on traffic and travellers, was a hard blow to its prosperity. (In 1851 the population of Burford was fifteen hundred and ninety-three; by the end of the century it was to fall to eleven hundred and forty-six.) Ten years later a vigorous attempt was made to bring into being a 'Cheltenham and Oxford Direct Union Railway', with a station, at the top of the hill, at Burford. In *The Oxford Journal* for 1862, and subsequent dates, there are advertisements for 'further shareholders' in the Railway, which contain the names of a number of supporters in Burford and the immediate neighbourhood.¹ On January 9, 1864, we read: 'It will be seen from an advertisement in this day's *Journal* that a meeting in aid of the new Railway is to be held in Burford this afternoon. Captain E. J. B. Marriott will take the Chair.' The project lived for some time and, in the end, died very hardly. But early in the 'seventies it did die, never again to be revived with any reality.

In 1861, eleven years after the middle of the century, Burford was in many respects very different from the Burford of to-day. Of the appearance of the streets at that date few of us now can have a picture. In London the Thames, washed backwards and forwards by the tide, was a gigantic sewer; not till after the very bad outbreak of cholera in London in 1861 was the first Sanitary Commission appointed; in Cheapside holes in the roadway were so many and deep that Mr. Walter Gilbey, taking a Shetland pony to Sussex in the 'sixties, had to convey it across London in a cab to prevent its legs from being broken. Naturally, then, at this time Burford streets were filthy; uncovered drains from the houses flowed down them; and men now living tell of their delight, as children, when upon certain days the brewery refuse, including broken bottles and corks, came careering down the *High Street*. Ten years later, indeed, in 1872, following on a bad epidemic of scarlet fever in 1871, Mr. T. H. Cheatle's 'report of

¹ Among these are T. Cheatle, Esq., Burford; Christopher A. F. Faulkner, Esq., Burford; William Hervey, Esq., Bradwell Grove; John Pinnell, Esq., Westwell; Humphrey Tuckwell, Esq., Burford; William Waller, Esq., Burford.

the sanitary condition of the Burford district' revealed an ugly state of affairs; two glazed pipes, Mr. Cheatle says, had then been laid in the *High Street*, but few of the houses are connected with these, and the pipes themselves drain into the river; at *Swinbrook*—he notes—the village is at the same time draining into the river and taking drinking water from it. It may be remarked here, in passing, that much of the struggle of the following thirty years for sanitary conditions and enactments is to be found in Mr. T. H. Cheatle's activity for this time. In 1867, for instance, convinced of the need for an airy, clean place in which the poor could be nursed, he secured and altered two cottages in *Church Lane*, and, with the aid of Mrs. Marriott and Miss Waller, furnished and opened them, in 1868, as the Burford Cottage Hospital.¹

Entering the town from the bridge in 1861, the general outline of *Ladyham* (divided then into two small houses) was much as it appears today, except that of the present twin cottages at the gate one only was then in existence. This—the southern one—was 'Sylvester's', a grocer's (the notion that the Sylvesters were ever important merchants is erroneous), almost the whole of the frontage to the road being the window. Where the Cheatle gates are now, stood a high-gabled sixteenth century house; in the structure of this and at right angles to, and touching *Wisdom Cottage*, was the entrance to the *Tan Pits*. The tan pits survived, though most of the Ansell sheds had disappeared. On the right-hand side of the street, below *The Vicarage*, was *Cob Hall*, falling badly into decay, but inhabited still by three poor families and the Boys' National School. The present *Falkland Hall*, though already out of repair and its upper part let in tenements, retained its beautiful turret with high pointed roof enclosing an outside staircase; it had, too, a central chimney nine feet square, round which all its fireplaces were ranged. The *Grammar School*, owing to its trustees' neglect, was again without a master, and empty; but it was the ancient building still, unmarred by its present factory-like additions, and only lately had been enclosed by a high wall where before the Green had come up to its windows. Two years later (1863) a public

¹ This hospital continued in *Church Lane* until 1902, when the more fully equipped building in *Sheep Street*, again by Mr. T. H. Cheatle's efforts, was erected. The operating theatre there was added, in 1907, as a Memorial to Mr. Cheatle's untiring work for the health of our district.

meeting of the Assistant Charity Commissioner with the trustees was convened at *The Bull*. Ten trustees out of the twelve are present; Mr. Packer, a Baptist minister, presents a Petition praying that the *Grammar School* may be re-opened as a 'Commercial School'. *The Oxford Journal* for October 3, 1863, contains an advertisement that the *Grammar School* at Burford is being opened two days hence. But the new master, G. W. Brown, was not more efficient than his predecessors; the Report on the School at the Inquiry Commission of 1868 could not have been worse—the final closing of the school is recommended. It was closed for a time, but only for rebuilding and in preparation for renewed effort; on April 10, 1869, it was finally re-opened, with a qualified master—the Rev. H. D. Moore, B.A. In 1876 the revised Constitution was drawn up by the Charity Commissioners.¹ Between the *Grammar School* and the churchyard still stood the house which was spoken of earlier in this chapter as being then Mrs. Pritchard's. Opposite to this, on the other side of the present gates to the Church, and where the *Church Schools* are now, was another private house, with a pillared porch; this porch has only lately disappeared from Burford. In short, the whole appearance of *The Green* must have been very different from what it is to-day—the only feature common to then and now being the beautiful building of the *Almshouses*. It was a Green still, in spite of the *Grammar School's* filching², with gracious dwellings and gardens neighbouring the *Almshouses*, with *The Eight Bells* opening on the corner of it—without of course, either the towering *Grammar School* frontage or the frontage of the house now at the right-hand end of the *Almshouse* line—the children's playground, and a real setting to the Church. In *Gildenford* the cottages, on both sides, were a single storey high; and where the baker's back gates are now was a court running towards *High Street*. *The Priory*, belonging at this time to Mrs. Charles Greenaway, though actually the estate was in Chancery, was decaying fast.³ *The Tolsey* had still its lock-up cells, and, round the corner in *Sheep Street*, its stocks. On the opposite side of *Sheep Street* and where

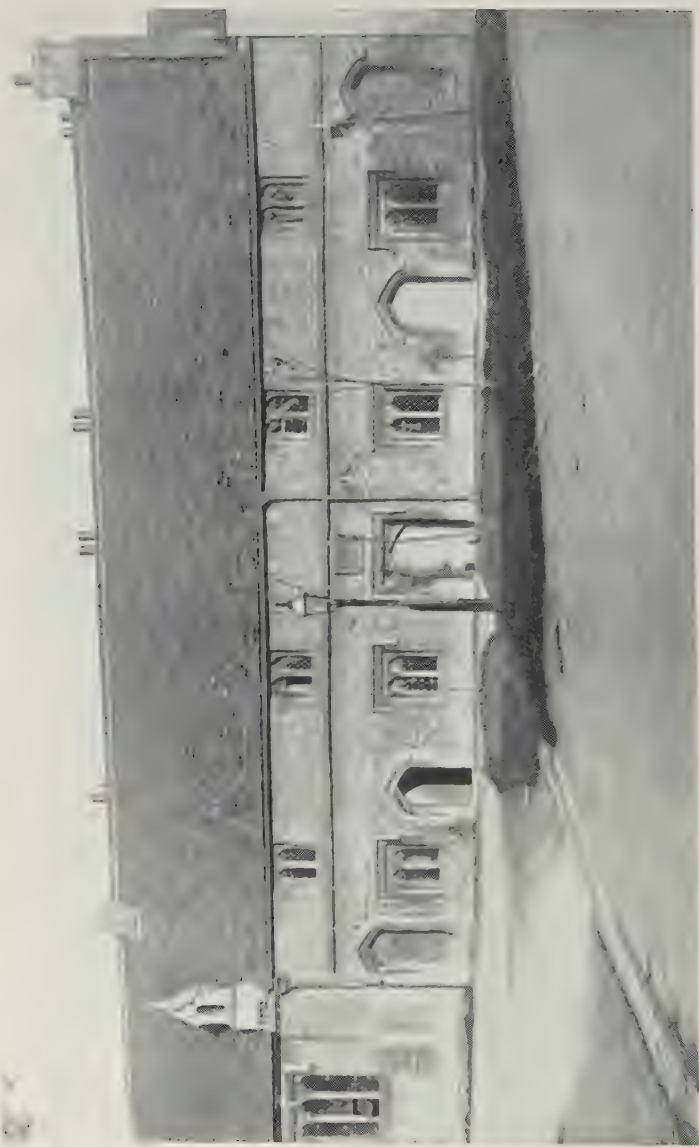
¹ In 1890 the buildings were enlarged; and in 1913 the *Old Hospital* building was added to them. Much that is fortunate has happened to the School since 1913; but that will be told in my next chapter.

² *History of the Town of Burford*, by the Rev. John Fisher.

³ *The Oxford Gazetteer* for 1852 speaks of *The Priory* as 'in deplorable decay'.



SPEAKER LENTHALL'S 'PRIORY' FRONT
(mid-1600's)



THE 'KINGMAKER'S' ALMSHOUSE, CHURCH GREEN

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

Lloyd's Bank now stands, was a cottage with sheds, about to be occupied by Bond's bell foundry. A rope-walk was behind Wall's shop in the *High Street*—the boy twisting the rope walked in and out of the house and across *High Street*. Opposite Wall's, in the double-bow frontage at *Swan Lane* corner, was a tailor's shop, the southern window filled by a board upon which four or five tailors sat sewing. An old cottage stood on the ground where the *Police Station* is now. There was a tobacco-pipe factory by *Springfield*. The best beer was brewed and sold at *The Plough Inn* (opposite *College Arch* in *High Street*).

Of the two dozen public-houses existing in Burford in 1860, a number in 1861 are to be sold—among these *The Bell Inn*, *The New Inn* and *The White Horse Inn*,¹ all in *High Street*; and the '*Bird-in-Hand*, Upper Road, Burford'. From this last a Mrs. Humphris, after eighteen years' tenancy, is retiring, and it is astutely suggested that these premises 'might' now become a private residence! Probably, with the ceasing of the mail coaches, all the custom of the house had vanished. It had been built by William Faulkner, uncle of C. A. Faulkner. The Rev. J. H. Burgess was at *The Vicarage*, Christopher Allen Faulkner was at *Bury Barns*; Mr. W. Waller² lived at *The Rectory*; Mr. Thomas Henry Cheatle³, with his sisters, in the present house of the family; Captain and Mrs. Marriott were at what is now called *The Great House* in *Witney Street*; the Rev. John Fisher, Burford's curate and the earliest of its historians, was just leaving his house in *High Street*⁴; Mr. Mathew Catlin Innocent, Burford, was taking to wife 'Esther Jemima, youngest daughter of Mr. Noah Goetze, of Soho, London'; James Scarlett Price and his brother were solicitors, a Christopher Kempster was still at *Kit's Quarry*. The weekly market was in existence still—throughout the 'sixties advertisements of it appear regularly in *The Oxford Journal*—it did not die out till the 'seventies. The year 1861 saw the last of the most ancient

¹ 'There is an excellent public pump close to these premises.'—*Oxford Journal*, advt.

² Buried at Burford in 1863.

³ Thomas Cheatle, senior, was buried at Burford in 1862.

⁴ 'To be sold by auction on April 3, on the premises *High Street*, Burford, all the genteel Household Furniture and Effects, the property of the Rev. John Fisher, who is leaving the neighbourhood.'—*Oxford Journal*, March 30, 1861. John Fisher's wife had been buried at Burford, on January 3 of that year.

of Burford Fairs, that of St. John the Baptist, held on June 24th. The Holyrood Fair, of September 25th, lasted on—lasts, indeed, to this day. The Burford Corporation was extinguished in 1861, and then the muniments, including the two maces and seals, were carried from the Church where previously they had been stored to the house of Mr. T. H. Cheatle¹. They were then presumed to be Mr. Cheatle's property, as he was the last surviving member of the Corporation. (A few years later, however, Mr. Cheatle handed over about half of the manuscripts to the Charity Trustees; these are kept at *The Tolsey*, and were docketed and arranged there by my late husband. After Mr. Cheatle's death his widow gave the Foundation Deed and some school leases to the Trustees of the *Grammar School*.) The year 1861 witnessed the founding of the 'Burford Reading Room', with some sixty members. Through this and immediately succeeding winters, Reading Room lectures were given almost every week at *Cob Hall*. The schools on *Church Green* were not built until 1863, and the lectures did not move there till a year or two after the building. The Reading Room committee was effective from the first, organising, among other things, a fête held every summer in the grounds of *The Priory* 'by kind permission of the lady proprietress'. *The Priory* took a place in Burford hearts that it had not at any time taken when inhabited. Certainly through the 'sixties, 'seventies and 'eighties it figures largely in the life of the place; at one of the Reading Room fêtes over a thousand people were gathered; and in August, 1861, a bazaar held in the grounds brought £100 on the first day, and the list of those present at it is almost a full list of the reputable persons of the neighbourhood.

Some idea of the extremely small sums upon which the labourers at this time existed may be gained from the 'Burford Friendly Institution' rules and regulations. In 1861 meetings of the trustees of the institution are held at *The George Inn*, and 'any person of good character and in good health, either male or female, residing within twelve miles of Burford Church' is eligible as a member to contribute payments for 'an annuity of 1/- a week at the age of 60, 65 or 70; 2/- a week bed-lying pay; 1/- a week walking pay; or £2 at death'. Of shops and shopmen in Burford at this time much might be written. Tallow chandlers' shops were prominent features of country town

¹ Carried there by Charles East.

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

and village life. Oil lamps had hardly come into cottage use; and though gas was soon to be talked of¹, there was as yet no kind of street lighting; and within their houses most Burford people were dependent on tallow candles. Burford tallow chandlers sent their own horses and carts to Gloucester to bring up the tallow they imported from Russia.

In 1868 Bond's Bell Foundry was active, and a bell was cast there for Burford Church. In 1868, too, the site for the *Police Station* was bought. In January, 1869, Count van de Weyer, brother-in-law of the Earl of Coventry, took *Bradwell Grove*, which for many years previously had been occupied by Mr. William Hervey and had been widely famed for its gardens. In the same spring the Rev. Shappurzi Edulji becomes curate of Burford, and Wombwell's menagerie visits the town.

1870 brought a number of changes to Burford. With the death of Mr. C. Allen Faulkner, the last person to hold the office of Rector's Churchwarden, and one who had borne an active part in the life of the place, came a great sale at *Bury Barns*, four hundred buyers sitting to lunch at it². The restoration of the church was begun. 'Steps', says *The Oxford Journal* of March 26th, 1870, 'are being taken to put this noble building in a thorough state of repair and order. For this purpose plans have been prepared by the Diocesan Architect, G. E. Street, Esq.'³ In the following April we read 'the restoration of the Burford Parish Church was commenced by the removal of the old pews. The new alterations will include a patent heating apparatus, new pews and new flooring'. At the end of the year 1870 there was much discussion as to the expediency of spending £30 to £40 on making good the floors of the boys' school at *Cob Hall*. The Vicar—the Rev. J. H. Burgess—mentioned that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners (to whom *Cob Hall* belonged) had offered him the property for £200, for use as part of the vicarage. The usual venison dinner takes place. The workmen (thirty of them) of Mr. Perrin, builder, of Burford, are entertained to supper at *The Eight Bells* by

¹ 'Burford. The inhabitants of the town are on the *qui vive* about the gas, which it is expected will be available in a few days for public use.'—*Oxford Journal*, October, 1864.

² Before inheriting *Bury Barns* from his uncle, C. A. Faulkner had been an oil and colour merchant in London.

³ Mr. G. E. Street's Report on 'The Restoration of Burford Church', is to be found in the *Burford and Fulbrook Parish Magazine* for April, 1870.

ROUND ABOUT 1800; 1850-1908

Mr. T. H. Cheate, for whom they are erecting a new dispensary. Cricket matches are frequent. A Horticultural Society exhibition, with the Coldstream band in attendance, and a thousand tickets taken, is held in *The Priory* grounds. In respect to the 'Burford Mop', it is noted that 'the greatly preferable system of Registry Offices' is 'decreasing the number of female servants appearing here'. 1871 brought a riot to Burford. In May of that year there was heated discussion—arising from the still pending question of repairs at *Cob Hall*—as to whether Burford should, or should not, apply for a School Board. The discussion grew to a contest. On July 22nd, 1871, *The Oxford Journal* writes: 'the first polling that has ever taken place in Burford, and, we believe, the first of the kind in the county, was conducted on Monday last for the purpose of determining whether a School Board should be formed for the town or not. During the whole of the afternoon numbers of people were standing in the *High Street*, in the evening increasing to a crowd; several fights occurred, and much personal abuse was bandied between the parties.' Real effort on the part of the police was necessary to prevent a general scrimmage. Ultimately a majority of fifty votes against the Board was obtained; the church bells were rung and the public-houses kept open late. 'The oldest inhabitant could recall no such violent scene.' But for anything unfitting in the behaviour of the Church School partisans, it should be clearly stated that the Vicar, Mr. Burgess, had no kind of responsibility. When, in September of this year (1871), he left Burford, regret was widespread. The Rev. Anthony Cass was appointed in his place.

The church restoration, which Mr. Burgess had begun, Mr. Cass continued with zeal. On Tuesday, May 9th, 1874, the foundation of the present pulpit was laid, and in it a parchment was placed recording that the work so far finished ('the Nave, the North and South Aisles, Sylvester Aisle, inside of the Porch and St. Peter's Chapel, restored and furnished') had cost £3,000 and that £4,000 more was needed. On May 30th a great opening ceremony took place, with a large luncheon at which a band from Birmingham performed. During the speeches at the luncheon Mr. Cass states 'there are two former vicars of Burford in the room', and he proposes their health. Mr. Burgess replied, saying 'if he could have foreseen the way in which the work of restoration would have been carried out, he did

not think he should have resigned this vicarage. It had been for many years an unceasing prayer of his that the church should be restored. For a long time there had been no hope of doing it, but eventually an answer to his prayers had come in a most unexpected way; Captain Marriott, in walking with him round the church, had one day made him a most liberal offer¹ and proposed he should set to work'.

The controversy that arose shortly after this between William Morris and Mr. Cass was to become famous. In 1876 William Morris, on his way from *Kelmscott* to *Cormell Price* at *Broadway*, saw certain renovations taking place at *Burford Church* and was horrified by them. In consequence of this, on his arrival at *Broadway Tower* he drafted the letter which, presently, through the agency of *The Athenæum*, founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings—with its motto 'Protection instead of Restoration'—and Morris himself for secretary. That this body, renamed later by Morris the Anti-Scrape Society, has done invaluable service no one to-day will be found to question. It is the positive of which acrimonious epithets hurled at *Burford* restorers were but the negative aspect. Yet, if only in regard to the hideous floor-tiles of our chancel, it was natural that Morris should feel strongly. As a man, his love for *Burford* was deep; and technically, too, he knew what he was talking of. He had himself been articled to *Street*, and, even when he forsook architecture as a profession, architecture remained for him always the mistress of which the other arts were but the handmaids. Desperately sincere and in earnest as ever, this controversy and the later crusade on Morris's part remind us of words written by him to his mother on the day when he and *Burne-Jones* relinquished their previous intention of entering the priesthood—'I will by no means give up things I have thought of for the bettering of the world, in so far as lies in me.' Yet a vicar of the middle 1800's, aspiring to accomplish the best he knew—and a toilsome and expensive best—for his church, may well have been annoyed at what must have appeared then a descent upon him from an unpractical artist's empyrean. But much water has run under the bridges since, and it behoves us, fifty years later, to realise how little Morris's campaign had in common with 'artistic' intolerance of a later time. Indeed, in what I have written of *Burford*, and the true possibilities of *Burford*, in the Introduction to this book,

¹ Capt. Marriott agreed to double whatever total was subscribed from *Burford*.

words of his were throughout strongly in my mind. 'I do not believe', he said, 'in the possibility of keeping art alive by the action, however energetic, of a few groups of specially gifted men and their small circle of admirers amidst a general public incapable of understanding and enjoying their work. All worthy art must be the outcome of the aspirations of the people towards beauty and true pleasure of life. This is the art which I look forward to, not as a vague dream, but as a certainty, founded on the general well-being of the people. It is true the blossom of it I shall not see; yet we are even now seeing the seed of it beginning to germinate. No-one can tell what form that art will take; but it is certain that it will not depend on the whim of a few persons, but on the will of all.' William Morris, moreover, is the greatest man who has touched this place closely in modern times¹, therefore we cannot expect that the wider world, hearing of dispute in matters of architecture and decoration between him and Burford, will be likely to give Burford the benefit of the doubt. Yet a doubt there was, in this use of the term; a doubt depending upon local knowledge. Morris was not familiar with the Church here as Mr. Burgess had found it. How that was, you and I may know exactly from the model now kept in the room above the Church porch². In 1828 the Rev. A. Dallas, Curate-in-Charge, had made repairs and reconstructed the seating arrangements. He had set all the pews with their backs to the High Altar and facing the pulpit, which he placed at the west end; (the chancel, apparently, he abandoned entirely); the font he moved to a position near the Harman monument; and he put up a new gallery. The Church, in fact, as Dallas made it, and as we may see it to-day in the model and in the plan hanging on the wall opposite the model, is not a church at all, but an assembly room. And this, and not a medieval church, as William Morris's knowledge of medieval churches of course would conceive it, was the starting point of the 1870 'restoration'³. Relatively to what Mr. Burgess and Mr.

¹ We are only nine miles from Kelmscott. Morris came to Burford often, with his family and his friends, in the 'eighties. After his death, his widow and daughter were tenants of the *Old Hospital* here for some time.

² The model was made by Mr. Mann, clerk to Mr. J. S. Price, a solicitor in Burford at this time.

³ In June, 1872, *The Oxford Journal* gave an account of the 1870 Church alterations. The chief point of interest in this account is that I learnt from it, for the first time, why the lovely brass to John Spicer and his wife Alys is left to us when almost all other

Cass had found, their work was restoration certainly. None the less, in the process, some things were done that our day cannot approve. Only by chance from a visitor of ours to *Calendars* did my late husband and I learn that 'Vermis Sum'¹ actually had marked Speaker Lenthall's grave. Mr. Cass told this visitor of ours, when he was wandering round the church in 1901 and meeting Mr. Cass inquired for the whereabouts of the Speaker's burial place, that a stone with that inscription had been broken up by local masons when they were repairing the floor of the church!² William Morris, in controversy as in all else, moved on large lines, like a man of his own sagas; Mr. Cass, in debate, was no pigmy also; and the tale of their contest is fittingly ended with the saying of Mr. Cass, told us by May Morris³, as having afforded her father much pleasure—'The church, sir, is mine and, if I choose to, I shall stand on my head in it.'

May, 1874, saw the first Agricultural Labourers' Union meeting in Burford. In that Union, inaugurated by Joseph Arch in 1872, Oxfordshire had played a large part from the first, and the farmers and employers of labour had retaliated by establishing the Oxford Union of Agriculturists. The attitudes of the two parties at this time are to be seen from the phrasing of *The Oxford Journal* report of the meeting on the one hand, and the claims put forward at the meeting on the other. Held in *Priory Lane*, 'perhaps two hundred persons, including women and children, present', we are told, 'the topics discussed were about the same as usual at these gatherings—the trials and hardships of the labourers, a rise of wages to 13s. a week, and Sunday reckoned as overtime.' Only in 1919 Joseph Arch died in a tranquil and highly esteemed old age. Dr. Warde Fowler had long ago told me that, occasionally meeting Arch in travel in and out of Oxford in the 'seventies, he had discovered then that the Union leader was far from a firebrand. Yet the employers' organisation of that time used every kind of activity to frustrate Arch's efforts, and succeeded in killing his Union for the moment. Consequently what Arch most dreaded brasses have disappeared. Mr. Dallas discovered their tombstone 'one foot below the surface of the Church'.

¹ See page 45.

² Our friend, Mr. A. S. Owen, late tutor of Keble College, gave us the words 'vermis sum' from Mr. Cass's talk, without having heard anything of the injunction in the Speaker's Will.

³ She, only surviving daughter of William Morris, died, at *Kelmscott*, in 1938.

—a rich harvest throughout Oxfordshire for the emigration agents—came to pass. Fifty years ago labourers' families did little letter-writing; for the most part they lost sight of relatives who moved overseas. But almost all the villagers in our district who to-day retain any knowledge of relatives in the colonies tell of their having gone from England at this time. To-day we have the Agricultural Labourers' Union active in Oxfordshire, and the statutory minimum wage for agricultural workers is of course in existence. Some may think that in this, as in other labour matters at the moment, the pendulum is swinging too far. But no opinion on this question is of much value which does not take into account the way in which the earliest, eminently reasonable, demands of Oxfordshire labourers were withstood.

Indeed, from the atmosphere of the 'seventies and 'eighties in Burford, as elsewhere, we find ourselves in many ways further removed than from periods more remote in date. Burford had its brass band, Musical Society, penny readings, cricket matches and Primrose League meetings (in the Church Schools). Fêtes in the Priory grounds flourished exceedingly; with 'ballot tickets' for portman-teaus, albums, vases and clocks, given out by the Vicar; there were also balloon ascents. Bell-ringing activity, under Mr. Cass, was great. We read, March 10th, 1888, 'In honour of the silver wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales a joyous peal was rung on Burford Church bells, consisting of five hundred and fifty changes of grand-sire triples. Curiously to relate, one of the ringers remembers ringing the same bell twenty-five years ago, on the occasion of the Prince's wedding, the only difference being that the ropes were then handled from the floor of the Church.'

The earliest book about Burford, by the Rev. John Fisher, published in Cheltenham in 1861, I have mentioned already. Its title, reasonably enough, for its date, was *History of the Town of Burford*; Mr. Fisher was an educated man. Thirty years later, in 1921, a second book with that title was produced by a Mr. W. J. Monk. Monk's enthusiasm was admirable, the amount of self-education he had achieved highly praiseworthy; but inevitably, under his circumstances, he was without the training to sift haphazard material: it happened that his brother-in-law was the Burford bookseller and by him Monk's booklets were produced. In the early 1920's, also, Canon Hutton, later Dean of Winchester, began setting down in some



ENTRANCE TO BURFORD, FROM THE BRIDGE (1815)



'THE COLLEGE' ARCH, HIGH STREET

magazine articles certain details that interested him in the history of the place. In 1903 these papers were collected and issued under the title *By Thames and Cotswold*, a book of sixteen essays, three of which are about Burford. In 1905 *Burford Papers*, also by Dr. Hutton, appeared. The title of this has caused misunderstanding; persons who have not read it are apt to allude to it as a book about Burford; though Hutton himself in his Preface had explained that the essays of the volume were linked under the title merely because of having all been written from, or to, the house he was then renting in Burford. Comparatively few pages of *Burford Papers* have any concern with Burford, and these—letters of Fanny Burney's *Daddy Crisp* to a sister of his—being written to, and not from, there, hardly speak of the place. The letters served, however, to start questionings in Dr. Hutton's mind such as whether the Burford house lived in by Samuel Crisp's sister had, at any time, belonged to the Swinbrook Fettiplaces? Answer to this is easy; in *The Oxford Journal* for January 21st 1791, I find an advertisement for the sale of various pieces of property in our district, 'parts of the estate of the late Thomas Fettiplace, Esq., deceased', and one of them is 'a messuage and Garden in Burford in the occupation of Sophia Gast'.

In 1904 Christopher Stone and Compton Mackenzie bought two cottages by the *Windrush*. This dwelling has, by many successive owners and by many additions and alterations, become the present *Ladyham*. Stone and Mackenzie remained in possession of it for two years only; but a permanent record of their stay remains in *Guy and Pauline*—a book in which Compton Mackenzie successfully vignetted rural corners of Burford. In 1907 *The Rectory* was bought by Canon, afterwards Dean, Beeching. From the 1880's Canon Beeching, with his family, had been spending every holiday in this neighbourhood. To the close of his life, in 1919, he came back often to Burford, and knew its ways and its inhabitants intimately. So secure, indeed were the latter in his affection that he was able to laugh at, as well as with, them. Beside his verses to 'The little town on the lonely down, Where I fain would be' remain in mind his humorous unpublished verses to the worthies of Burford.

On the 31st of December 1906, the Reverend Anthony Cass had died. He had been succeeded by the Rev., afterwards Canon, William C. Emeris.

CHAPTER IX

1908/1928

In 1908 *The Priory*, which for the eighty years that then had elapsed since William John Lenthall's desertion of it had been empty and becoming ever more ruinous, was bought from Mr. A. R. Hurst of Barrington Grove by Colonel B. de Sales La Terrière, who rebuilt it sufficiently to sell it in 1911 to Mr. Emslie J. Horniman. Mr. Horniman's restoration was of a thorough quality and *The Priory's* present admirable south wing is his erection entirely. Any account of Burford between the years 1911 and 1924 must say much of Mr. Horniman's benefactions; for not only were these remarkably generous and frequent, but they were contributions to historical knowledge and preservation of Burford's beauty made by an instructed and artist antiquarian. Indeed so great was his solicitude for Burford buildings, so numerous, in consultation with my husband, his redemptions of ancient houses from ruin, as to render a list of his successive restorations almost a summary of the development of Burford's architecture. For instance, the house that forms the south corner of *High Street* with *Church Lane*, renovated when apparently almost beyond renovation (later one of Mr. Horniman's manifold gifts to the *Boys' Grammar School*), shows the earliest completely stone-built Tudor structure. Further, in 1925, he presented a first-rate block of buildings, rather lower down *High Street* on the same side, for inauguration of a *Girls' Department*. Similarly saved to us and our descendants by Emslie John Horniman are also *The Rose and Crown*, *The Corner House* (opposite the *Rose and Crown*), *The Highway*, two smallish houses just below the *Wesleyan Chapel*, and two Elizabethan ones neighbouring the Police Station.

Shortly after Colonel La Terrière's 1903 purchase of *The Priory*, the Reverend William C. Emeris, M.A., vicar of Burford, had rebuilt the ancient *Sheep Street* house now named *Wayne's Close*. Meanwhile the house next but one to *Wayne's Close* on the east was being renovated by a widowed sister of the Vicar's. This latter, now known as *Greyhounds*, like many plain-faced Burford houses, is of

Elizabethan building behind. Between these two—*Waynes Close* and *Greybonds*—stands the typical fifteenth century burghage house now known as *Calendars* of which my late husband—Richard H. Gretton, Burford's historian—and I began the restoration in 1912 and of that, with *Wayne's Close*, more must be said in a subsequent chapter. Here the points to be immediately noted of these three adjacent houses are that the Vicar's admirable renovation was the earliest such complete rebuilding; and that all three have been, and are, lived in and cherished by persons coming to them from elsewhere. The number of painters and authors who have come in the last fifty years to live in Burford is very remarkable. Among the earliest was Wyndham Hughes, stained glass maker and painter; he, happily for Burford, though aged ninety-four years, remains here still. But by no means all have remained. I recall one day in 1918 at our *Calendars* luncheon table the late Canon Beeching remarked to the ten of us there, 'You all think of yourselves as rooted in Burford to stay till your deaths; but, with the exception of one tied professionally, none of you were here in 1908 and I predict few will be in 1928. You, when you go, will go unwillingly, as I did. But, having come from away, something from away will call you. Modern, educated Burford inhabitants really change swiftly.' On many occasions in the now more than twenty-five years since they were spoken I have been impressed by the truth of these words. But my addendum to them has been 'How equally remarkable is the swiftness with which persons of like kind take the place of the leavers'. For instance, to *The Great House*, which Canon Hutton had previously rented, came in 1912, with his mother, Mr. H. E. Conway the painter; and the *Mouseham* which this Mr. Conway subsequently bought and now lives in, belonged to and was lived in previously by Denis Eden the painter and his wife Helen Parry Eden—the poet and a distinguished reviewer for *Punch*. Helen Parry Eden enshrined that little house in a noble poem in *The Dublin Review* of January 1917, and also in her 'I am glad the Martins are building again'. In *Littleham*, twin house to *Mouseham*, for long lived Mrs. and Miss Byrne Bryce, Miss Byrne Bryce being the painter of the picture of Burford *High Street* which, in 1921, was bought to hang in the Laing Art Gallery at Newcastle. In 1915 Miss Campbell Murdoch, with her mother, took on lease from R. Holland Martin, who had recently inherited the *Westhall Hill* property,

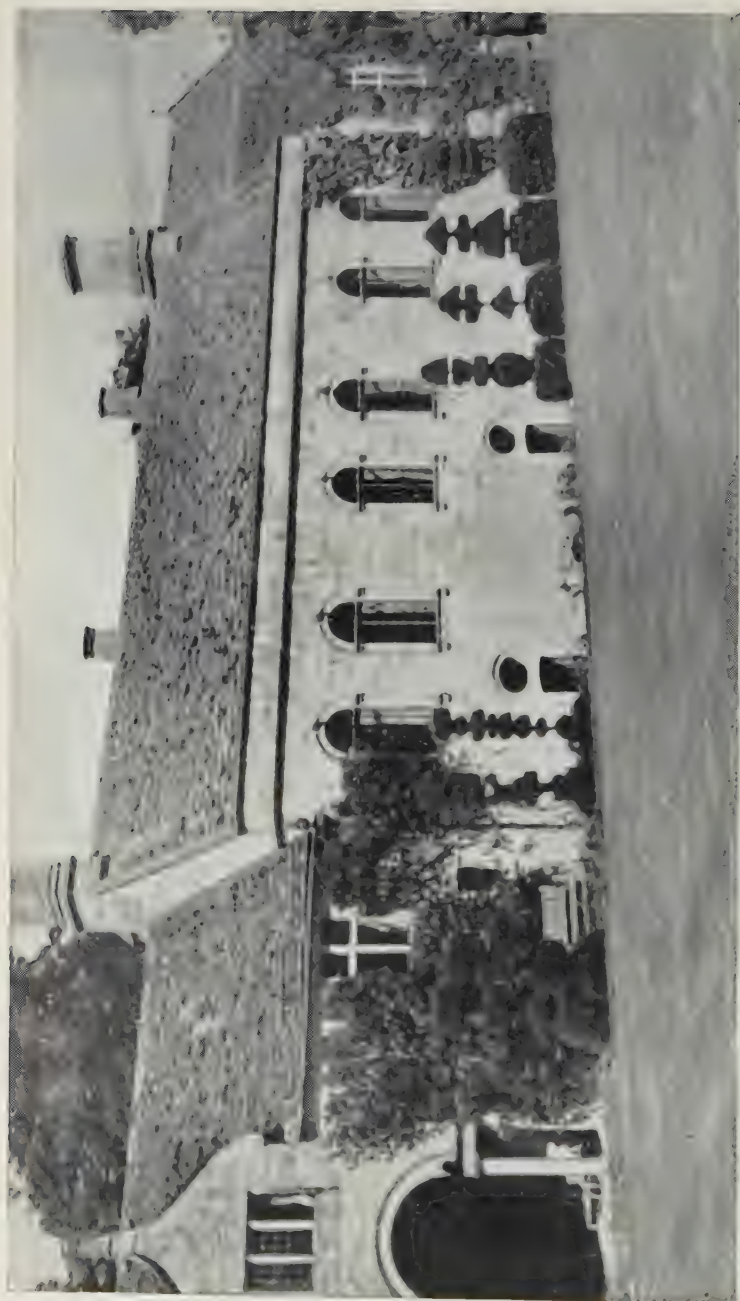
the corner house of that property, and Miss Murdoch set up the *Burford Hand Weavers* in *Lawrence Lane*. Also on that *Westhall Hill*, in 1920, Captain and Mrs. Kettlewell, of Folk Song and Country Dance activity, built their southward-looking house. In 1924, Miss Maud Hurst, sister of Burford's Lord of the Manor and of Sir Cecil Hurst, K.C.M.G., reconstructed a house at the west end of *Sheep Street*, making, for it, a charming garden. Miss Hurst was a well-known *Salon* exhibitor of paintings and colour prints, and with her lived a Miss Florence Campbell, indefatigable painter of Burford streets and water-meadows. About the same date the Elizabethan house called *Pytt's Piece*, at the summit of *High Street Hill* on the east side, was being restored by Sir Philip Stott of Stanton. Another house at the top of the Hill and almost opposite *Pytt's Piece* was shortly to change both in appearance and use. But the story of that belongs with large matters of 1925 to 1928—alteration in methods both of transport and of education. And these must wait to be spoken of till we have asked what has to be told of the years 1914 to 1918 when, for most of us, Time seemed to stop. Did experience of that war alter Burford minds fundamentally?

To review any but a minute part of those experiences is of course impracticable. Our War Memorials—a cross in the *High Street* and a tablet in the Church—hold thirty-six names, the names, in the order in which the men fell, being Walter J. Cheatle, Leonard F. Cass, William Kite, Charles J. Aldridge, John Tyler, John Webb, Harry Pratley, Harry Cook, John Green, Percy C. W. Constable, Frank Whiteman, William Hicks, Louis Campbell Murdoch, William Morse, Wilfred F. Burton, James R. Somerville, Arthur S. Conway, Arthur W. Candy, Harry Holborough, Thomas Cook, Richard Bishop, Albert Jacques, Frederick G. Wickins, Arthur Paintin, James Search, Henry R. Timms, Frederick C. Wiggins, Joseph H. Brunsdon, Francis Hussey, Henry Barnard, Alfred J. Preston, Jack Forest, John Howse, John Rowels, George Search, Harold Bishop. Of the feelings of those who lived on about these young men's deaths there seemed later even less than there seemed in 1918 to be said. Incidents of each of those days have gone beyond the range of words except a poet's words, such as Helen Parry Eden used in her 'Recruits on the Way to Oxford, 1915'¹. Being held to Bur-

¹ *Coal and Candlelight* (John Lane).



THE 'PRIORY' FRONT NOW (AND EVER SINCE JOHN LENTHALL'S
REDUCTION OF IT IN 1809)



SOUTH FRONT OF THE PRIORY RECREATED BY E. J. HORNIMAN

ford myself for much of 1914-18 by the presence in our house here of a Bohemian dependant who, if apart from me, must have suffered internment because the haphazards of war had temporarily made her an 'alien enemy'¹, my four years' work as Honorary War Pensions officer (first for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association, and then for the War Office so soon as the Government War Pensions for dependants other than wives were instituted) prevented me, even if I would, from losing sight of the details of casualties. The first name was that of gallant and gay Walter Cheatle, the youngest of the doctor's family. The second name was of a son of the long-time vicar of Burford—Mr. Cass—whom Mr. Emeris had succeeded. The third name, William Kite's, was of one who had gone out from different conditions—conditions I can never forget because through week after week, stretching into months and then into a year of the war, I had eased my own heart-ache for my husband's absence in France by talking at the fireside of William's infirm old father and mother of the details of his childhood. On a wage of never more, and often considerably less, than fifteen shillings a week, the old Kites had most tenderly cared for, and for a while succeeded in rearing, six children. But, because of poor feeding and housing, all had grown tubercular and five of them had died in their early years. That these parents had sorrowed deeply and genuinely over each child's dying was evident from their vivid accounts of each one's particular loveliness. Yet their losses had not embittered the old people; on the contrary, the father delighted in telling me, with a chuckle, of his former master's comment when he (Kite) had announced he was going to marry—that it might have been supposed Kite would have

¹ A small leaded window on *Calendars* staircase has beneath it the words 'In memory of happiness in spite of the War 1914-1918, and to mark the place of Mr. Crichton's Christmas tree. From Emilia Hauptvogel.' My brother-in-law David Crichton, who took most of the photographs that illustrate *Burford Records*, and was himself to die shortly after, prepared at *Calendars* in December 1918 a Christmas-tree, ostensibly for our whole household, which he arranged that Emilia Hauptvogel was to uncover for him by candlelight upon Christmas morning before anyone else was astir. She uncovered it thus to find it hung solely with gifts each marked with the names of sister, brother, niece or nephew of hers in mid-Europe of whom she had been hearing nothing at all through those never-ending four years—names unknown, she thought, to us all, but which D.S.C. had been secretly extracting through his small son's questioning of her.

had enough to do with his wages in buying bread for his own mouth! 'He thought as I'd repent it,' Kite said, 'but nevur I did!' William was the last son left. His chest was weak, and the doctor had said 'he hadn't no cause for to go', but 'They other lads kept on at him'; and so he had gone. He was a devoted son, and he was their all, yet they had not clung about him; they had not even seen cause for complaint. Life, through all their experience, had been taking away whatever it gave. William, they said, was bound to do what the others were doing. But 'war', 'enemies of war', what could such words convey to those whose lifetime's horizon had been five miles of Cotswold road? The world's future, to them, was this single life. Now the boy was away, their talk to me was only of the past; it was almost as though William already were dead. So it seemed my first business to hold him in life, before their eyes. Day after day we talked of the Dardanelles, of the blue of that sky, the purple cliffs and the sand, the ways and the order of ships; a number of details they came really to grasp, and even to recognise certain points on my maps. But the day that we received, the three of us, tidings of William's death, his mother went back to just where we had started—her son either was not dead now, or he had died, the only way she had seen men die, coughing, in someone's attic bedroom. I knew then, what I was to realise more and more fully with every month of the war, that it was, and must be, to such parents, a wholly inexplicable machine that had ground their loveliness to dust—war, all-pervading and vivid as yesterday, but with no more meaning than the wind that blows from the hills. In reading *Sergeant Grischa* I hear again the voice of William Kite's father. He was not to stay in life long after his son, and when he died his crippled old wife was taken from Burford. Even to end in the home of her memories was not granted to her. No-one raised, for her and her like, the only Memorial that could have been of value—security that till, as she phrased it, she went out in her coffin, she should remain within the doorway that had framed her last sight of her son.

Name after name in the list brings back its memories—memories too raw and sharp to be written of where the parents are still alive. One more only, comparatively late in the list, son of a widowed mother who has died since, I will allude to. The father had died in Frederick Wiggins' babyhood—a babyhood, be it remembered, be-

fore the existence of agencies for widow's relief. Yet not only had his frail little mother supported Fred throughout his school days, but, with heroic effort, she had postponed his self-support for years further by letting him enter his apprenticeship to the chief Burford grocer. When the war came he was within a year of that apprenticeship's end—within sight, that is, of a living wage. And that sight ever danced before his eyes and his mother's. He was crooked, too, from birth, with a twisted neck. Yet he volunteered, got out to France, and into trench warfare even. During those months I saw his mother each day, holding my breath as it were. Then relief came. Frederick had pneumonia, was nursed long in a base hospital, and subsequently was judged, as he surely should have been judged from the first, quite unfit for active service. He was drafted to England, visited his mother, and then was employed in an English camp store. His mother was no coward by nature; only she had had too much standing up to life, through too many years; her resilience was gone. 'If the dear boy had to go out again to France it would kill me,' she would say in her soft little voice as the tears ran down her cheeks. 'Nothing on earth can take him to France again,' I would retort. 'You are very fortunate; at worst, he would only be sent to garrison quietly somewhere like India.' 'Yes,' a wan little smile now accompanying the gentle voice, 'I am fortunate; I do not forget the others in France. But—' and the tone of the 'but' showed her unconvinced and uncomfortable about what, in a rocking world, was to me a certainty. I held, and I thrust again and again under her eyes, the official documents that declared Frederick Wiggins to be dispensed completely from further fighting service. In such a welter of unavoidable suffering, unnecessary fear was so out of place that I spent myself unremittingly for its removal. Presently I seemed to have succeeded: India was accepted as the worst possibility. And India it was. The instruction reached us in February, 1918. To have a son on the way to India, I now reiterated, was to have a son safe. But, with the coming of the order, Mrs. Wiggins' obsession about Frederick's being sent again to France reawakened. I put the facts to a high military authority, asking reassurance for this mother whom I could not reassure. Through his kindness I was put into touch with a chaplain who was sailing with the contingent for India; and he wrote, to be posted some days after their embarkation, exactly the letter I wanted to Mrs. Wiggins—

detailed and completely reassuring, even to minute description of the serving out of the men's sun helmets. Yet the mother's uninstructed fear was to prove more solid than all proofs. Those troops, en route for India, were in trains crossing France when the Germans broke the English front that March. They were detrained, and hurled, with the cooks and the bricklayers and the bottlewashers, into the line of resistance. And on the day I was reading and re-reading to Frederick's mother that chaplain's letter, Frederick Wiggins was listed as 'killed, fighting in France'.

Some cheap war talk had lingered about us till the autumn of 1916 and the Battle of the Somme; but after that, those still at home learned, at least, the grace of silence as, monotonously and relentlessly, under the falling leaves and with the coming again of the swallows, name followed name in the lists of the killed. And, in such silence, each of us vowed to ourselves that gratitude to the fallen would remain with us green as those graves by the *Windrush* where, after long lives, these should have lain. The less said now of these dedications the better; for so many forgot and snatched again greedily at personal and sectional advantages. Yet Burford, in this connection, possesses a lasting title to honour; for it has had, living and writing in it, one who, ten years after the war, possessed the power, as well as the determination, to compel remembrance, Mr. C. E. Montague had been living at *Kit's Quarry* house, Burford, for some three years before, in May 1928, he suddenly died. Perhaps the greatest of Mr. Montague's war stories are in *Action*, the volume of his published after his death. But I like to give here the concluding paragraph of a letter of his to me, when I had thanked him for the relief of spirit *Rough Justice* had brought to one who, though always a pacifist in presence of militarism, had never been able to find harbourage with pacifist groups because of their apparent blindness to the splendour of certain war-time developments. Mr. Montague wrote from *Kit's Quarry* on April 2nd, 1926, 'About war—the horrible truth is that it has elements of beauty, physical and other too—the jewel in the toad's head as it were. You will remember that William James says in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* about alcohol—how it owes much of its hold on mankind to its power of inducing in many people fugitive passages of real exaltation and liberation of mind. Much the same seems to me true of war, worse luck, and I agree that some forms

of pacifist advocacy, like some forms of temperance propaganda, miss their true mark because they ignore this and give the militarist or the sentimental idealist of war an excuse for saying that the pacifist does not understand what war has to offer. But, with nearly everybody over-emphasising everything in controversy by a thousand per cent., it's sorely difficult to make anyone listen if you only say that war is a loathsome thing with strange accesses of beauty which make it still more dangerous.' 'Fugitive passages of real exaltation' certainly was all that conflagration of Europe and holocaust of our fellows had been able to effect.

This is no place in which to discuss the misdoings of the Coalition Ministry of 1919-22. Even before its disappearance that form of government retained few advocates. It is sufficient here to remark that no intelligent person attempted later a defence of that Government's dropping, in the autumn of 1921, of the Agricultural Wages Board and the County Agricultural Wages Board Committees, which it had itself instituted with flourish of trumpets in 1918, and as to which the joint Manifesto of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law for the general election of 1919 had given a renewed and absolute pledge. How deeply that breaking of faith with the agricultural labourer in 1921 reinflated every reactionary force among the more retrograde employers only those who had been serving for the previous three years as the original Government-Appointed Members for the Counties were able to tell.¹ The real reason of discontinuance of the Boards was, of course, the Coalition Ministry's response to the after-the-war economy cry. They withdrew the Corn Bounty from the farmer rather sooner than had been projected, and, as a sop, in the bounty's place, threw to the farmer the new-found status and hope of the labourer. Such doings, to educated people, now appear as a commonplace of that 'Hang the Kaiser' election. But the pig-headed of the small farmers, wholly ignorant of world causes of unemployment, believed, and told their labourers, that it was their influence that had destroyed the Wages Boards; they talked at once of return to pre-war standards of wages. So the agricultural labourer saw himself

¹ Five Government-appointed Members, one a woman, to watch impartially between the delegates of employers and employed, had been given to each County. Lord Ernle appointed, and Lord Bledisloe reappointed, the author of this book as the woman for the County of Oxford.

deserted by the politician at a moment when an abnormally early harvest was in, when general after-the-war unemployment was at its worst, when the bad farmer—bolstered in existence by seven years of inflated war prices—was at his stubbornest. The rural labourer enlisting in 1914, 1915 and 1916 had known little and cared less about the government of England; for of modern England he had not been a part. His great-grandparents had been politically minded; but his grandparents and parents had fallen out of that kind of thinking for now almost a century. At the passing of the 1832 Reform Bill there had been bonfires and all-night rejoicings in Burford and Stow-on-the-Wold, as there had been in Liverpool and Manchester and Leeds. What happened in rural England just after that is not easy to tell. As Professor George Macaulay Trevelyan has said, the story of the villager from 1832 to 1888 has still to be written. The material for that lies only in the records of the doings of the County Justices of the Peace; 1834 witnessed transportation of the Tolpuddle labourers; and the amount of overseas transportation that is noted, for the ensuing twelve years, in our Oxfordshire Quarter Sessions documents is amazing. Defeated in Parliament in 1832 by ‘modern’ interests, the Diehards had fallen back on their strongholds in the country and hastened there to destroy all connections between themselves and the manufacturing towns. Disposition of the forces set for battle at that time is admirably recorded for us in George Meredith’s *Beauchamp’s Career*; Everard Romfreys, who earlier had been admirable in their villages, then lost their bearings entirely. In Parliament, the nation seemed to them bent upon suicide; all that was left to them was to insulate their villages till the latest possible moment. Their nerves were foreseeing the extension of the new householder franchise to the country districts (actually they did succeed in staving that off until 1884!) and they honestly believed the vote would be thrust on the agricultural labourer purely in the interest of the Liberal (to their mind the demagogue) party. They met, therefore, any expression of wish for a vote, on the part of the rustic or of his innocuous ‘societies’, as proof of the ‘town agitator’s’ influence. With individual dependants the Old Squire’s relation had been pleasant. Where he failed completely was in his official capacity—as a Justice of the Peace not controlled now by the central government as Justices of earlier centuries had been controlled—called on to face a new day and labourers as

'a Class'. How successful the Everard Romfreys were in their efforts for insulation is proved by the fact that, at the middle of the century, no place at all was being given to the countryman in political programmes. Disraeli, in his bargainings with John Bright in 1867, regarding the monster demonstrations for Parliamentary reform, actually said that the Counties need not be considered, that the concern was with the industrial worker merely! So, thereafter, until the Joseph Arch Movement of the 1870's and the sentences Chipping Norton magistrates passed on women of Shipton-under-Wychwood in May 1873, this district was not penetrated by one single beam from the lantern of publicity. Pleasant and unpleasant local events succeeded each other within it, but without one glimmer of what you and I mean by national interests. Meanwhile, for industrial England, the main stream of mid-nineteenth-century development had been towards Nationalism. Through Chartism, anti-Corn Law, and Franchise agitations, comradeship—community feeling—between the skilled artisans in all the urban districts had been set up. I am not concerned here with the good or the evil of this associationalism; but only with the fact that the lessons in citizenship that had been, at least partially, learned since his 'hungry forties' by the town worker—co-operation and civic activity through electoral representation—had not been learned by the countryman. The countryman's thought—his community thought, I mean, for it goes without saying that in individuality he is often the townsman's superior—remained where it had been early in the century. Moreover, from the 1830's to the 1880's, transportation overseas without provision for return at the expiration of sentence; greater stringency in administration of the Game Laws increasing the younger men's migration to railway work and town factories, and the wholesale activities of emigration agents¹ had been draining the countryside of its most energetic characters. Consequently when, in 1888—*fifty years after it had given self-government to the towns*—Parliament did bethink itself of rural administration and bestowed on country districts a framework for modern

¹ Joseph Arch, in his evidence to the Royal Commission on Agriculture of 1881, estimated that in the years between 1871 and 1880 seven hundred thousand agriculturists, by help of the Agricultural Union alone, had left England for the Colonies. Certainly it is unusual to find to-day among the most intelligent old people of our district any who cannot tell of uncle, brother or sister who set out overseas before 1880.

democratic life—County Councils and District Councils, and presently Parish Councils—the men to fill that framework had disappeared. The framework of representative government exists in rural England today; *the reality does not exist*. The nearest a twentieth-century Oxfordshire labourer has come to that was when he first knew the workings of his Agricultural Wages Board in 1919. Fathers then had written to their sons at the war that, it seemed, the countryman's hour, at last, was arriving; 'they' in exalted places had begun to care about him and to value his work. He 'never had held with no promises', he said; but now the County Boards, as he called them, had come to his doors and the farmers were having to obey them. Since his grandfather's day the townsfolk had been receiving all the consideration. But now—what Parliament had said couldn't be gone back on. Nobody was at hand to remind the writers and the recipients of such letters that 'the Government' was untraditional in its constitution, almost entirely opportunist in its actions. Before Christmas, 1921, the Agricultural Wages Board and the County Board Committees were gone. Later, under the first Labour Government, they were more or less, resuscitated. But, before that time arrived, the harm had been done, irreparably. The wary countryman had been 'had', and, by 1922, such young labourers as did come back to our farms after that war were there in a bitterness of feeling quite out of control of their constitutional Unions. Their Unions had been made fools of, they said; then the worse for the slow-going methods of those Unions. Agricultural Union membership fell off; cleavage of outlook between the elder labourers and their sons grew most astoundingly. Of course the wild juxtapositions of war service had introduced these country lads, far too suddenly, to red-hot notions; but time would have cooled these had they not been inflamed by this real grievance at home. Politicians, the young men said, they had learned at the war front, are all of them liars; the working man's only help would be in himself. So, in 1921, was pitched clean away the opportunity of getting the countryman again within the national machine. Trade Boards—Wages Boards—he could see the meaning of; County Councils he looked on as, at best, academic; at worst, the Justices' rule re-labelled. As for the Parish Council, that he leaves, with a wink of his eye, to the petty landlords of the bad cottages and the shopkeepers; he despises these persons, but while his wages were

what they were he was not going to gainsay those from whom he was in need at any moment, at every moment almost, of financial credit.

Between 1880 and 1918 shortage of house-room in Burford was being felt by the labouring poor more than at any earlier time. For when, in the 1860's and 1870's through Sanitary Commissions and allied efforts, modern standards of drainage and air-space were being forced upon Burford, the disappearing of the mail coaches and post-chaise travellers had been leaving plenty of house-room unoccupied. Many of the larger houses, though falling into some decay, were, from the 1860's to the 1900's, being lived in by two, three, and occasionally even four, labourers' families.¹ Therefore the movement of the first decade of the 1900's, for the renovating and occupying of such houses by educated persons from elsewhere, squeezed the labouring people back into hovels. Before 1920 Mr. Horniman had rebuilt three or four cottages; but for the most part the cottages of Burford courts and byways and of the hamlet of Fulbrook were in possession of small speculative owners who asserted that they had not capital to improve, or even to repair, them. A number of these—notably those in *George Yard* and some in *Guildenford*—were remaining in a disgraceful condition. On the top of Burford Hill, but fortunately back from the line of the ancient street, a row of new cottages had been erected by the County Council. But in the 1920's, rents of these kept them out of reach of farm labourers earning but 30s. a week. Meanwhile such labourers, included merely in the Health provisions of the 1911 National Insurance Act, possessed no State guarantee for times of unemployment.

Excepting postmen, policemen, and motor drivers, almost all young men workers remaining in Burford in 1918 were builders or builders' labourers. All, or almost all, of these refused to the word 'tradesman' its modern meaning. Of a shopkeeper proving incompetent to the fixing of what he sold, it was said to me 'He's not a tradesman; he don't work for his living'. For to them to 'work' meant to make, or to grow, or to mould substances; mere selling seemed to them silly. Mastery of stone and lead and wood, mastery

¹ Till 1880 the upper part of *The Falkland Hall* was let into tenements. Up to this date that building retained its beautiful peaked turret inside which was a spiral staircase; also it had a central chimney ten feet square, round which, on the ground floor, a number of open fireplaces were set.

trained in apprenticeship (anciently in Burford Guild apprenticeship) was in the elder men's blood. Fifty, even thirty years ago Burford abounded in small 'master men' and a considerable number of these had remained till close on the 1920's. For though no one date can be said to begin or to end an epoch, yet 1928, bringing us as it did the deaths of James Drew, Henry Taylor, Harry Smith and Henry Bond, seems to mark the passing of a particular type of man. His social superiors bemoaned him loudly after he went. Yet they had been far from guiltless in the processes that hastened him out of existence. Why was it, I found myself asking a group of builder's men working for me in 1928, that only the elders among them could do the dry-walling? Because the younger man was not apprenticed nowadays, I was told. Why not? Because, after the years of apprenticeship, he would earn only one and twopence an hour, and that only intermittently, while the altogether untrained man would be regularly earning his shilling an hour—only twopence an hour more, even when at a job, for all those years of waiting and for skill.

Jim Drew, who knew the values of stone as an artist knows his colours and, blindfolded, could tell the source of any stone that had been quarried between Oxford and Bath, earned never more than one and twopence an hour at his masonry. Henry Taylor's beautiful cabinet-making, done with the minimum of material and the maximum of workmanship, earned never so much. Neither did Harry Smith nor Henry Bond. For these last three were 'master men', and they were caught between capitalism on the one side and the modern price of unskilled labour on the other side of them. Inferiors in their crafts, because able to raise some money, built 'businesses'; while Taylor and Bond and Smith not only continued to work with their own hands but were not able to pay the wage of the unskilled labourer to aid them to lift and to carry. So they lifted and carried alone—oak beams and stone planks and great lengths of iron stove pipes—and died of worn-out hearts. And here is the point I am intent on at this moment; Bond and Smith¹ died lacking even the ease in obtaining their Old Age Pensions, which is the lot of the un-

¹ Smith himself did not live out his seventy years; but the Old Age Pension claim I helped his wife, who was three years older than he, to fill out was met with a grant of 5s. a week only, instead of the full 10s., on the ground that the heavily mortgaged house they lived in was family property.

skilled labourer. Harry Smith did not live on the plane Henry Bond lived on. One fault, at least, he had of the kind District Visitors condemn. But he was a part, and a very likeable part, of Burford. He had lived here for the whole of his sixty-eight years, and in the house in which he died for forty of them. He had been a bell-ringer, captain of the Fire Brigade, and a sweet singer in the Church choir. A trifle hard of hearing in these later years, it was his habit to lean over to catch any order or injunction about his work, saying 'Pardon', with hand to his ear and an eye twinkling as if in anticipation of the jolliest news. 'Yes', he'd reply. 'Yes, I'll come to look round this afternoon and I'll make a good start in the morning,' and in the morning he would come in his ever-spotless mason's apron to make more than a start on the job. For some years his heart had been failing, and in the spring of 1928 he was kept in bed by what might well have been his final illness. Yet that summer saw him gallant as ever on the peak of *Calendars* roof, gay because he had outwitted the fate that was threatening him; but, as much, because he had just found that the youths building near by 'didn't like getting on ladders'! After his death I remarked to the *Calendars* cook that we should always remember Smith as he had been up on that attic roof that September. 'Yes,' she replied, 'his last day up there, the day before he took to his bed, when I was crossing the courtyard he came up at me out of the top hole in the roof, Jack-in-the-box like, and called "Cuckoo".' He was then sixty-eight; the doctor had told him his heart was worn out; he was almost penniless and perpetually worried that he was unable to make provision for his wife's future; the next day he was to take to his deathbed! Till the last of his illness the best solace that could be brought him was to plan fresh building for him to do. Only a few days before his end, when I had to lean my ear very close down to catch any words, he murmured, with that capacity for laughing at himself and the whole pack of his troubles which was never to forsake him, 'I'll come round this afternoon and we'll make a real start in the morning.' The manner of his dying, the pain and rendings of his fine frame, will not bear thinking on. I have to think of him as climbing, stalwart and debonair again, to the High City, perhaps to be set to work with the makers of Burford Church on some celestial turret in the morning.

Henry Bond I had come to know first when I had jammed the

lock of my desk, and had sent to ask him to mend it. I came in to find him bending over the desk, a bag of tools beside him. He touched his forelock, as he did always before speaking, and said, his voice falling a note sadly, 'He won't unlock, you locked him all right.' The voice grew eager and then fell again, amusedly, 'Yes, he locked right enough, but he won't unlock.—Ye-es.' A bit sadly we stood facing our problem. 'I'll have to take him off.' Again the tone fell a shade. 'Will that be difficult?' I asked. 'No, oh no. I can take him off; well, yes, I can take him *off*,' and the tone rose a note. I left him at that and went out-of-doors. Coming back, I stopped beneath my window; the air was filled with a rich, though muted, humming. Cautious as I tried to be, he must have heard my footstep, for I came up the stairs into silence. As I re-entered the room he was carrying the lock to the window, screwing up his large face and cocking his best eye to see what was amiss. Then, with his big hands, he showed me what the key wanted. 'He don't catch,' he explained; 'he needs another piece'—the piece indicated was microscopic. The tone now was eager, confident; he was at grips with the difficulty. 'I'll take him away with me,' he said positively. 'You mustn't lock with *him*, for you'd lock him again,' he chuckled; 'he locks right enough but he don't *unlock*.' He gathered up his tools. 'And what do I owe you?' I asked. 'We-ell,' he spoke with surprise—the job he saw as important, but the payment!—'but I ain't made him yet; no, I ain't made him ye-et.' 'I may be out when you bring the key,' I said, 'I would much rather pay you now.' 'Oh, well,' he soothed, conceding to my impatience, 'sixpence would it be perhaps?' naming the sum as if he just hoped it might be permissible. I produced the sixpence and he took it reluctantly, the key not being mended yet, as from one whose impetuosity must be humoured, saying that was kind of me, unnecessarily kind. 'Thankee, ma'am, thank you *very* kindly.' Then he turned back to me from the doorway. 'I'll put some water in the batteries, they needs filling every two months. Ye-es,' in a happy voice, 'it's better; for they might dry up and your bell wouldn't ring, and then you'd wonder.' Here his tone lingered regretfully as over a human being frustrated; but it rose again in amusement. 'You'd press the button and he wouldn't ring.' I pictured myself standing before the bell helpless as I had stood before the lock, but reassurance came to me soothingly. 'Just a little water, ye-es, that's all he needs,

just a little water every two months, ye-es.' To portray Bond one would have to reproduce the tones of that voice, gentle, unexcited; yet within its restrained limits rich and so variable. I knew Bond well for fifteen years, yet I never heard him speak without marvelling at the quality of that voice. He was a musician. With a royal humility he righted locks and mended water-pipes, because his bell-founding had fallen away; but by calling and long careful training he was a church Bell-founder, and when he was casting a bell he could hear the note of it fully a second before it came to our ears. He and his trade were akin; heavy-looking and unwieldy in body, every contact with his spirit revealed a rare fineness of casting. One summer morning at *Calendars* a cherished little godchild of six years old pleaded to be 'sent on a message, alone'. Racking my brain for an errand close enough at hand, and on our side of the street, I bethought me of Henry Bond and a washer that was needed for a bathroom tap. She started off blissful. The 'message' having been invented merely for the child's sake, not till the next day did I remember to ask her what Bond had said. She might have forgotten; but she had not forgotten a word; for, unlike most grown-ups, he had talked the clearest good sense. Her blue eyes under her primrose-coloured hair rose to my eyes gravely, 'he said "Such a little knock, I thought it was a little elf".' If Henry Bond had said anything else she had forgotten it, and grace was given me not to enquire. In the broad morning, the rest of us intent on our breakfasts, the unwieldy workman in soiled blue overalls and the tiny butterfly child had spoken as poets speak—freemen of the Kingdom. I am obliged to tell of Henry Bond in these slight pictures because the great things learned of him, and never from himself, one is not at liberty to talk about. Some of them were epitomised in the words his sister sobbed out to me as we left the room where he had just died, 'The whole of his life he's done nothing but forgive and forgive.' Only once in our intercourse, and that intercourse naturally was concerned largely with the boggles of other workmen, did I get him to accuse work done by anyone else of being bad; and that time I, amusedly, tricked him into the accusation. We were waiting for a stove I had ordered. 'I've telegraphed,' he said, 'but it ain't got come.' And when it did come it had been broken and mended again. 'This couldn't have been done by mistake?' I asked, to see what he would say. 'Well,' he said, torn between loyalty to

me and the rule of his lifetime, 'he don't fit, he don't fit no way at all; no, the pipe won't go into the hole; it *seems* as though it got broke and mended again.' Always after that incident of the lock I had paid Bond more than he asked to be paid. Even so, relatively to other men's charges, his pay was not sufficient. I cherish those neat and dignified bill-heads 'Henry Bond, Bell-founder and Agricultural Engineer'. They were so very hard to obtain. I used to ask him at first, every week, for a bill to date; I knew well the slenderness of his resources. 'But, Lor, ma'am, it ain't wrote out yet,' he always countered me with. One afternoon I called him away from that work for a minor job inside our house, and when it was done I, naturally, wished to pay for it. He was genuinely dismayed, 'I couldn't charge for this,' he said. 'How could I when I'm doing the other work?' 'But you're not working by time,' I said, 'You're working by the job.' 'Yes, ma'am, but it's all your work.' Really he seemed to regard me that time as a wayward child demanding my dessert before my dinner was eaten. So I hit upon the expedient of posting to him, weekly, so much on account. Then, vague as he had always seemed about what was owed to him, he was not one atom vague about what he owed me. His heart ill could afford an extra walk up the hill, yet a formal receipt for whatever sum I had sent was invariably dropped into our letter-box that very same evening. Burford would not be Burford if opinion agreed in it; differings are the breath of its life. Yet no difference of opinion as to either the excellence of Henry Bond's work or the modesty of his charges existed. Even the closest-fisted of the small farmers long bemoaned that Bond's like will never be seen again in their day. Yet, while he lived, no one saw to it that his unremitting work should bring him a competence; to pay more than he demanded, it was said to me, would 'spoil' him with the 'modern commercial spirit'. So for the later years of his life he lived more and more comfortlessly; his work growing harder and harder and, relatively to the increased cost of living, worse and worse paid. Moreover, comparatively well-to-do persons kept him waiting for payment. His breath grew shorter and shorter, and, at seventy years, he applied, most shyly and diffidently, but finally he did apply, for his Old Age Pension. It may seem incredible, but it is the fact, that for some time it was refused him; once, it was said, on the ground that he had money in the Bank. That dealt with, I was informed that

he had tools he might sell. This last was too much; the whole facts of the case were carried elsewhere, and a fortnight after, the pension was being paid. But Bond then had lost nearly two years of his rights, and within the year he was to die. The unsistence in the manner of his dying matched with his living. Unable to see to read, or to smoke, he sat in a chair, usually quite alone, till almost the last. He had been devoted to the Church and its services, 'But it's my *work* I'm missing the most,' he commented to me, more than half shocked at the fact. While to his sister he said, a day or so before his end, with the nearest she had ever heard him approach to querulousness, 'Tidy my tools away, and I shan't stay here long.'

I opened this book by asserting that Burford's vitality is inherent. Till 1918 that vitality wore much of its ancient clothing. Local colour it was that attracted sophisticated strangers at the opening of the nineteen-hundreds. Then the texture of rural Oxfordshire 'lay so thick', as Edith Wharton noted. Every minute valley constituted 'a distance' and every distance had made a divergence in characteristic—desire to preserve divergence also. My parents' generation wrote 'We do not visit over the hill'; and though this, in part, was consideration for their carriage-horses, it was by no means that merely. Of course, even without the war of 1914-18, the coming of motors in place of horse-drawn vehicles must have flattened those partitioning hills, hastened these lower Cotswold slopes out of the gait in which William Morris had found them

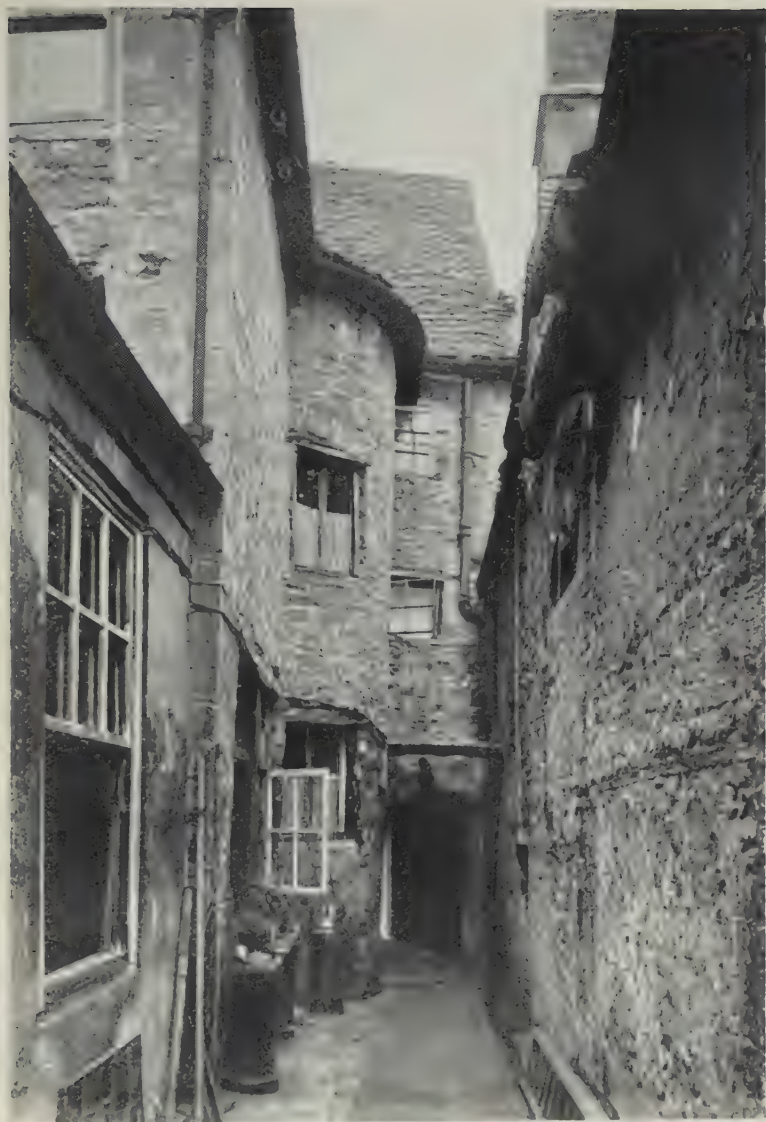
*'Telling a tale not too importunate
To those that in the sleepy region stayed.'*

Yet because the galvanising of 1914 to 1918 came wholly from outside, bringing not stimulation but only shock, it stripped disastrously. Drew and Taylor, Henry Bond and Harry Smith—all outstanding in 1928—had been typical fifteen years earlier.

There remain still to be spoken of in this Chapter the educational and transport changes of the 1920's alluded to earlier. With respect to the first, in the year 1923 Mr. H. F. Piggott, M.A., who then had been Grammar School headmaster for thirty years, retired and was succeeded by Mr. D. C. G. Stileman, M.A. During the thirty years of Mr. Piggott's regime some genuine educational development had taken place, but under stultifying conditions; because, though the

ancient endowments were now paltry beside the actual cost of maintenance being derived from public funds, the ancient Governing body had remained in control. At last, in 1925, the Local Education Authority decided to assume the entire control and maintenance of the school, and the old Governors surrendered all functions except management of the minute Trust properties. A new Governing Body was constituted. Upon this, the old Governors—successors of Simon Wisdom's friends—have three representatives; but eight places are taken by nominees of the Oxfordshire Education Committee and one place each by representatives from the Oxford University Hebdomadal Council, the Witney and Burford District Council, and the Burford Parish Council. This fundamental change, backed by Mr. Horniman's generous extension of the buildings, enabled the Grammar School work to be much enlarged. Also it was Mr. Horniman's additions to the Grammar School premises proper that led to the disuse in 1924 as a Boarding House for the youngest Grammar School boarders, of that nineteenth century building I have alluded to as being opposite *Pytt's Piece*. In the spring of 1928 this was enlarged and opened as an Hotel under the name of *The Cotswold Gateway*, this name being printed on the earliest tickets of the G.W.R. Cheltenham-Paddington motor-coaches which made their original stopping-place for Burford at the hotel.¹ With the transformation of this School Boarding House into *The Cotswold Gateway* Inn, the wheel of travelling methods in Burford, in 1928, came exactly full circle. For it had been in the 1820's that a William Faulkner, then living in the adjacent *Bury Barns*, had erected the *Bird in Hand Inn*, to house at this point passengers waiting for the Mail Coaches. With the coming of the 1860's the 'steam rail' had drawn all those travellers away. Now motor coaches had returned them to the road; and their stopping-place here had made its appearance on the self-same spot. If this book afforded space to detail the vicissitudes of Burford travellers through those years from the 1820's to the 1920's it would provide vivid reading. Conditions of even late nineteenth century travelling have amazingly gone out of memory.

¹ I am in possession of the first ticket issued by the G.W.R. Company for this route; because at the moment when these Cheltenham-Oxford-London motor-coaches were instituted the Great Western Railway had asked me to produce their 'From Lechlade to Staines' pamphlet.



ENTRANCE TO ONE OF WISDOM'S HOUSES (*circa 1570*)
(*Harry Smith's home ; now Wisdom's Close*)



A STRAIGHT FRONTAGE TO MASK A MEDIAEVAL HOUSE, ADDED IN THE 1700'S,

How many of us, for instance, realise that till 1871, even on main roads, every six miles or so was barred by a Toll Gate, or are familiar with the *Itineraries* that our grandparents carried on their journeys as we have carried our *Bradshaws*? Up to the 1830's Burford was on the route of thirty horse-drawn Mail-Coaches daily; and was the nerve centre of an elaborate Posting system.¹ Yet by the 1870's grass was growing at the doorways of what had been the liveliest hostelrys. Now the 1920's had brought (along with the stream of private motors) Motor-Buses to take up passengers for a five-hour day in London, returning them to Burford by seven o'clock in the evening. Such increase of speed over the horse-omnibus that not many years earlier toiled up the hilly five miles for a stopping train at Shipton-under-Wychwood G.W.R. station, was of course remarkable. But the most operative part of the change lay in the decreased cost. The return-Burford-to-London fare was now 15/-; while countryfolk content to take the slower local Oxford Company's motor-bus could go and come for their day's shopping in Oxford for 2/6. Small wonder that Burford retailers did much less business than they had done twenty years earlier!

Necessarily, after the war, Burford, unless mummified into a mere pleasure resort, had to become 'England, North-West Oxon Division' and come to possess in common with most similar-sized places, a Men's Institute, Women's Institute, British Legion Branch, Infant Welfare Centre, W.E.A. Lectures, Mother's Union, and kindred activities.

But the degree in which the activities were ceasing to be distinctively Burford's was the reason for my 1920 writing of this book, and for my additions to it in 1929.

¹ See page 97, Charles East's account of his boyhood.'

CHAPTER X

SINCE 1928

In 1928 Burford inhabitants complained loudly of their night sleep being broken by the increasing number of late-going motors. The 1940's have brought in inconceivable then—at best, hour after hour flyers in training from adjacent aerodromes; at worst, grinding and jerking of enemy planes with crump of their falling bombs. Burford lay in the 1941 German 'corridor' from the south to Coventry and Birmingham. Through seemingly interminable darkness we heard droves of them coming over, saw their flares, and watched beside our children until they roared over us back. Now, as I write in June, 1944, the sky is shaken by phalanxes of allied planes racing to Normandy, while, head to tail, convoys tear up our byways. In Bayeux, on this night, Burford's earliest (1085) 'Lord of the Manor and Town of Bureford'—Odo, 'fighting Bishop' of Bayeux—must surely be out and about.

Yet there remain moments when night stillness is sharp; when only Burford's dead seem to breathe, while shoulder to shoulder its houses, each in some degree maintaining its amazing individuality of wall angle and roof line, stand ironically waiting for daylight and the incredible actualities of our modernity. 'Who', one asks with Thomas Hardy, can want 'to write a book in a world of such a kind?' Here a personal word is needed in reply. Even the re-editing of the early portions of this book and writing its final chapters would not have been undertaken now in this fifth year of war, when we have a myriad unaccustomed duties to perform, had it not been for the urging of a writer who is, to almost unparalleled extent, imaginatively 'in' this war. Storm Jameson is not only President of John Galsworthy's *P.E.N. Club*, but a writer whose novels throw so much light on political cross-events in France of May 1940, that to us, the remainder of whose lives must be shadowed by those events, her judgment counts as unique. To-day Storm Jameson writes:

'This book must be reprinted—not in an indefinite future, but now. It is now it is needed, now when the enduring English spirit is

going through its greatest ordeal and the greatest test. Even a victorious end of the war does not end the ordeal, it only opens a new phase of it and of the strain on our long tradition. In such a deep sense, your "Burford" is England and that spirit by which we live and from which the future, if we are to be saved, must spring, not as something grafted on to the past but as a continued living growth. I realised while I read your book what it is we owe to our past of slow patient give-and-take. Even the Civil War, reflected in the faithful mirror of your "Burford", shows itself as a family quarrel, to be grieved over and composed, as indeed it was. And here too shows, with a strange clarity, the difference between our civilisation and the as old, as subtle, civilisation of France. So many French Burfords known to me have—with the same dignity, the same self-awareness, the same deep strength—a long cruel history of sieges, massacres, religious and civil hatreds, a history which goes some way to explain the present bitterness of division in France. The contrast could scarcely be plainer than you, without intending, make it. It is not only because writing of Burford you write of England herself that this book should be reprinted now, but because you have created so true—and how rare this truth is—so lucid an image of all we fight for.'

So even if, in common with all companions worth the naming, one is overpressed by toils and griefs, some now sadly accustomed, some poignantly fresh, from the present many sides of the war, to ignore the command of such words would be both mannerless self-consciousness and to risk being haunted by Galsworthy's 'Nightmare':

*'There fell a man, in the heat,
Out of the race he ran,
Who knew too well he was not beat.
Oh God! Was I that man?'*

Yet, inevitably, in rewriting Chapter IX and, for the first time writing this—Chapter X—certain adjustments of values, certain facts, have had to be faced. In Burford of 1911 to 1928 I was receiver of records; to-day I am part of the records themselves—a sadly large part, for now amid the inundated overpopulous Burford of these War years there are none in possession of Richard Gretton's or Canon Emeris's authoritative knowledge of its history. Meanwhile, among

'bright' and uninformed persons, statements, almost rivalling the form of an antique furniture dealer's offer to me of a 'genuine original antique Jacobean reproduction', fly round. Yet warnings against mis-statements gaining popular credence will of course remain almost equally unheeded by the cheap romanticist and the financially involved. However to such as prefer facts to the more coloured fictions—dated house leases to myths of 'underground passage from the *Church* or *The Priory*'—one line of guidance, at least, may be indicated. It is that, excepting houses restored under expert knowledge¹—and all such are named within this book—the oldest and most interesting Burford houses lurk behind the unlikeliest fronts, such as those of *Preston's shop* and of *Warwick House* in *High Street*, and of *Greyhounds* with its nineteenth century 'Temperance Hotel' frontage to *Sheep Street*. Indeed not the least interest of many of these eighteenth and nineteenth century mask frontages is that they are not *fitted* masks. For instance, even from the street level, the earlier top storey windows of *Warwick House* are seen to be out of alignment with the superimposed parapet window openings—the old windows remain, but to look out askint. Following the new—straight ashlar front—fashion, led by *The Rectory* and *The Great House*, plain Burford citizens, characteristically with tongue in cheek, apparently copied their betters. But I do not forget a thirty years ago early morning when I chanced on an elderly stranger chuckling, at one moment breaking into actual laughter, as he meandered up Burford *High Street* scrutinising, from across the road, each house in turn. When we grew friendly, this visitor from afar, informing me his own vocation was building, gave me as cause of his laughter that here was unimaginable 'badness of building'. I, upon my part, could but assure him how the original owners of those run-up frontages would have enjoyed his understanding of those façades being mere trade-rivalry symbols—the Tudor and pre-Tudor houses in which they were living remaining untouched and uninfluenced, behind. Among mis-

¹ Expert restoration does not necessarily mean restored to uniformity of a single period. In *Calendars*, for instance, Richard Gretton's unrivalled interest in Burford's development forbade him to remove the nineteenth century sash windows jammed into the fifteenth century frontage. To him such interpolation was an integral part of the story of a house, provided enough of the original was present to make the anachronism clear.



NEWLY-BUILT COTTAGE IN LAWRENCE LANE



CALENDARS, FRONT ON SHEEP STREET (*circa* 1480)

statements, I lately heard it said that BURFORD FAIR, the remnant of which is with us still every September in *High Street*, used to be in *Sheep Street*. Not only is this untrue; it is, in a sense, the opposite of truth. For, of the two yearly Fairs held in Burford, the one, now extinct, was the *Lord of the Manor's Fair*, held on St. John's day, in June, in *Sheep Street*, for gathering tolls and fees and for hiring;¹ while the *Town's Fair*—'*Burford Fair*'—on Holyrood Day in September, was always where it is in *High Street* and *Priory Lane*, and was ever a festal occasion. Nothing could have induced a mediaeval burgher or indeed a responsible nineteenth century townsman of Burford to have imperilled his right of planting *his* Fair in the most established and populous places of Burford—the *High Street*, *Priory Lane*, *Church Green*. Among the late Dean Beeching's entertaining reminiscences of Burford in the 1890's was tale of his indignation at refusal of the Burford patriarchs 'Higgins and Wiggins and Wall' to be impressed by his threat of 'proceedings' should the customary placing of the '*Burford Fair*' Merry-Go-Round at the gate of *The Rectory*, within which that September Mrs. Beeching lay gravely ill, have disastrous consequences. Apparently, nothing that he—Beeching—could argue, even most uncharacteristically threaten, could persuade to that occasion's placing of the stridency elsewhere. Yet in *Priory Lane* on Holyrood Day the Merry-Go-Round was not present! And on summoning grace to go and say 'Thank-you' to the City Fathers concerned, Dean Beeching was informed 'We did not intend to put it there, this year. But, of course, we could not reply to you anything to give away "Burford Fair rights" '! Also regarding Christopher Wren, strange assertions that works of his exist in Burford are being made! Sole origin for this flight of fancy is the fact that Christopher Kempster of *Kit's Quarry* house quarried stone, and laid stone, for Wren in London and Oxford².

¹ This *Mop*, for hiring of carters and labourers, held outside *The Lamb Inn* in *Sheep Street* was in existence until 1914. To me, looking on at it in 1913, two elderly Burford inhabitants asserted that acceptance of a shilling from a would-be employer legally bound the man or woman standing for hire to rendering twelve months of service.

² Speculation as to how Kempster conveyed his stone from Burford to London is answered in the *Day Book* discovered by the incoming tenant—a Mrs. Buckingham—when the last of the Kempsters left *Kit's Quarry* house in 1885. This *Day Book* gives details of Kempster's carting the stone from his quarry to be put on the Thames at *Radcot*—spelled by Kempster 'ratcat'—bridge.

Finally before leaving these Prefatory pages, I have to emphasise the fact that in this book no enumeration of persons merely because they have been, or are, sojourners in Burford is attempted. Sole basis of a man's or woman's inclusion is the part they have borne in developing the life of the place. And this decision, operating in earlier editions for a quarter of a century past, surely possesses a hundred per cent appositeness in these years since 1939 when myriads of roofings form mere temporary shelters—no longer brood over those born into them or over lovers by whom they were chosen. Indeed in what attempt this final Chapter may make to represent the persisting reality beneath seething and militarily-overrun Burford, perforce there will be recurring returns from persons to buildings. And a short survey of Burford's types of old houses—each a pool of continuity engulfing the tempestuous and temporary—I, ever grateful for long happiness in one of these¹ make choice that in speaking of it and its like this book shall close. And, in addition to this personal inclination, has been petitioning from readers of earlier editions that somewhere, for visitors with scant time in Burford, should be a summarising page or two of what has been said here and there in the text of Burford's architectural development—page or two to be carried in hand, Guide book fashion, up and down the story-telling street.

Meanwhile I regret that the projected clay models of Burford *High Street* in 1500, 1600 and 1700 did not materialise further than plan upon paper. There exists, however, a series of lantern slides which my husband and I had made, from photographs David Crichton senior took to illustrate our history of Burford's domestic architecture. This collection of slides with the Pittaway family Chart (already lectured on at Burlington House), Titcomb's Plan of Cob Hall, and other objects illustrative of local history it is my intention to give to Mr. L. S. R. Jones—headmaster of Burford Council School who, in remarkable degree, has given, and is giving to his pupils a vivid and intelligent interest in the place of their birth.

In consequence of the encouragement, combined with knowledge of current misstatements, told of in the foregoing pages, I now ask myself what historical incidents have been unearthed or contemporary

¹ The tome *Burford Records* by R. H. Gretton, M.A. (The Oxford University Press) has as closing words of its Dedication 'And in commemoration of our home at Burford'.

events worthy of note have occurred in Burford of the past sixteen years? Of historical incidents there is much that might be added to the opening Chapter's mention of William Brampton. Ostensibly merely son of an Oxford tradesman and owner of *The George Inn*, Burford, but actually for fifteen years after his attainting to be Henry Tudor's bogy—Brampton is, without doubt, Burford's chief political figure. For proof as to this one needs but to scan the list in which his name is ranked on the Bosworth battle Attainder. I only do not write of him lengthily here because I have written exhaustively in another place.¹ Concerned with those same Plantagenets is the, newly-noted, Burford Church-Green meeting arranged by Warwick 'The King-Maker' to turn the young Earl of March, hot-foot there from proving his mettle at *Mortimer's Field*, into Edward IV. Of all our Church tower and ragged-staff *Bear* have gazed upon, those two colloquing horsemen that February morning most seize my mind—the over-experienced, all-powerful elder, and the youth about to blaze in Kingship as 'Sun in Splendour'² and yet both already so close to submergence of their personal, colourful England.

Among recent events, but also linked with those Plantagenet happenings, is the restoration of a house now called *Hill House* on Burford Hill, a short distance above *Swan Lane*. Among a number of notable features it apparently contained a Sun-in-Splendour emblem. This is of much interest; because as I have said, the town until the late 1500's did not reach upwards beyond *The Tolsey*. Any house of the 1400's higher up must have been, so to speak, a 'country house' belonging to someone of note—probably someone in official contact

¹ 'Crumplin' (Benn, 1932).

² 'In late February 1461 the Erle of Warwycke met with the Erle of March by-side Oxforde X myle oute of hit, at a towne of his owne i-namyd Burford a-pon the Wolde . . . There the Erle of Warwycke informyd hym of the gydyng and dysposyscyon of Kyng Harry, and of the Quene, and of the love and favyr that the comyns hadde unto hym, and by ryght to occupy the crowne of Inglonde, and soo hys hert was sum what made gladde and comfortyd. But he was sory that he was soo poore, for he hadde no mony but the substance of hys mayny come at hys owne coste. Alle soo the XXVI day of Februer next folowyng Edward the Erle of Marche com to London out of Walys and the Erle of Warwycke with hym xiM men with hem bothe, and they enteryd unto the cytte of London, and there hee toke uppon hym the crowne of Ingland by the avysse of the lordys spyrytual and temporalle.' *William Gregory's Chronicle* (folio vol. number 1995 Camden Soc. W.S. XVII).

with the *Royal Manor* which stood on the present *Bury Barns* site. This *Hill House*, restored by Mrs. S. Lloyd, but sold by her and sold again since, is an outstanding example of architectural interest that was hidden by modern defacements, hidden so completely in this case as to have eluded the eyes of Mr. Horniman, Richard Gretton and Canon Emeris, though those—disinterested and non-speculator—restorers of the 1920's, should perhaps have been impressed by a sentence in the manuscript 'Notes On Burford' written by W. J. Titcomb in 1891. This reads 'I once heard it said that Tanfield first lived at a house which stood where the buildings of Kerr's farm near *Swan Lane* now are, and that there are indications in such buildings of past grandeur'.

Among other recent happenings also on *The Hill* has been the erection of a house for the Roman Catholic Priest—the Reverend A. V. Littledale—the architect of this house has been architect also of the chapel and the entrance to the lately-opened *Burford Cemetery* (on the left of the road from *Sheep Street* that leads upwards alongside *Kit's Quarry*). Respecting that *Cemetery*—its necessity and the choice of its site—controversy characteristic in vigour of old-time Burford arose. Why, it was asked, should persons whose great-great-grandparents lie beneath Burford Church tower be taken off and away for their burial, at will—whim—of County Councillors and of 'foreigners'? More than anything else for easing this resentment has been the carrying to the new place of Canon Emeris's body. 'Him being lifetime beside, us won't be so lonesome', an ancient Burford labourer ejaculated recently. Thus, as materially sunset illumines the new rawness of the *Cemetery*, so spiritually lies upon it the final peace-making wrought by one who thirty odd years before had only very reluctantly moved from his scholarly leisure in the neighbouring village of Taynton on repeated urging from the, then, Bishop of Oxford—urging that none but a gentleman such as he could control into decent limits Burford squabblings betwixt Low Church and High Church. That task, highly distasteful to one of his temperament and breeding, undertaken, his success in it is known to us who for more than a quarter of a century witnessed the degree in which the, then beautifully tended, garden of the ancient *Vicarage* became—for 'High' and 'Low' and Nonconformist alike—the centre of Burford. Small wonder that when this Vicar, who knew and loved the Burford

Church as no vicar had done before him and continuously from the year 1907 until 1937 had expended on its fabric much of his private income, elected, by way of example, his own burial to take place in the new cemetery, parishioners of his began to feel some familiarity there—perhaps even leanings towards his corner of Heaven! For I recall a Burford soldier lad's writing to Canon Emeris, in 1917 from Palestine, 'I find, as you told us, this place *is* worth attention!'

On a day of June 1939—for a festivity held in the grounds of *The Priory* to augment a Sinking Fund towards the maintenance of Burford church fabric—I agreed, with Mrs. Vanamee's help, to gather and exhibit a number of remnants of Burford's past which I knew to be reposing in cupboards and garden sheds. With the exception of the eighteenth century Corporation mace, I avoided, intentionally avoided, relics of any notoriety. My aim was to bring to the notice of newcomers those inhabitants who could show proof of their great-grandparents' artifice avocations in Burford. To my mind, permanently sore for so much the place has been robbed of by the war of 1914-18, reappearance of many ancient tools, in the hands of those who had seen them used, was solacing. Also certain of these objects were reminders of conclusions reached by my husband and myself when working back and back over family names in the Church Registers. For instance, repeatedly we had asked ourselves why should it be thought strange that Burford cottagers, among themselves, observed social distinctions? The Francis family, for instance, have lived here for over six hundred years; and lent to this 1939 Exhibition by Elizabeth Francis was her father's portrait, on the back of it written 'John Francis Sexton and Verger of Burford Parish Church during whose years of office he has seen seven vicars and thirty curates'. The sextonships of this John Francis and his son David, alone, covered practically one hundred years. And near to this Francis portrait was set a big parchment roll upon which Richard Gretton and I had assembled the names for a genealogy of the Pittaway family—working stone-cutters all—coming through seven complete generations to the Owen Pittaway present-day master-builder in Liverpool Cathedral. Why on earth should such families accept undistinguishing classification with—say Essex marsh—labourers devoid of settlement or of pedigree? Benjamin Richards, though crippled from the last war, fortunately for Burford remains as its

metal worker. He lent, for exhibition, prints—taken by Leonard Russell Conway, artist and engraver—from beautiful copper plates for Bill heads and Letters engraved by his (B. E. Richards') grandfather 'John Richards Brazier Coppersmith Iron and Tinplate worker' who in 1830 was lessee of the inn then standing at the corner of *Lawrence Lane* and *High Street*, and employed, under himself, in his metal shop, eight journeymen. Moulds of Burford tallow-chandlers and a gunsmith's¹ 'hammers' came to us also. But for stability of service in a single hand the 'prunged' fork with which Frank Cook has been turning soil of Filkins and Burford for 'seventy year' took precedence. Long it is since its owner recounted to me 'I began me edication young and got through it quick; I wur eight year old when me faither took me from school and put thur fork in me hand'. That father he had gone on to describe as an 'onusual man' who customarily, between dawn and dark, sheared forty sheep where other men sheared but twenty. Frank is now nearly eighty years old, but he goes to an inn each evening for his pint and a game of darts and, oftener than not, he regales the rest of the company with stories and songs—his repertoire contains more than forty ballads and songs. Of him, as of Henry Bond, the outstanding fact is that his daily work remains for him the most zestful of adventures—in constructing the new garden for *The Old Barn House* his terracing had been mathematically exact; his 'dirtten' path straight as his dart in flight, or, if curved, curved in a gracious sweep; his vegetable plot clean as a drawing-room; his tool-shed orderly as the most modern kitchenette. Competence in man or mechanism rouses his admiration; his praise is unceasing for the wonderful 'engIne'—the central-heating plant that answers his bidding with a certainty which appears to him miraculous. Two memories of Frank Cook are unfading. One is of a long-ago evening when three persons, not unintelligent—at any rate what is termed educated, two of them possessing Oxford degrees and the third three U.S.A. degrees—after an hour and a half of toiling and exact measuring of lengths and breadths and heights desisted

¹ Death in the present World War of sub-Lieut. in the Fleet Air Arm Jack Evans, only son of C. A. Evans, owner of the Burford Hill ironmongery shop, has ended Burford's connection with skilled gunsmiths. Often when staying in *Cornwall Manor* in the early 1900's have I listened to our host—Alec Hall—and his sportsmen friends extolling C. A. Evans's knowledge of guns and skill in their treatment.

from effort to induce a 'Kooksjoie' to enter the gate of *The Old Barn House*; and thereafter, merely waited for Frank Cook's return from his supper in order to place the recalcitrant object in a garage outside. So weary were the three who had struggled as perhaps to be just then overconscious of Frank Cook's leading characteristic not being humility, and so had retreated within the house drawing-room before encountering his comments. When lo! out at that drawing-room french window stood Cook and the 'Kooksjoie'. Had he induced some persons to unite in throwing it in *over* the high wall? we asked. 'Her come thru the gaite, quite aisy' was all that we learned. At this hour in the evening of struggle 'quite aisy' was too much for the over-tired muscles and nerves of Frank's hearers. Laughter, almost hysterical laughter, waked the night echoes. In the long years since that evening Frank has been working, as gardener, for Mr. Philpott of *Greyhounds*. There a short time ago, a new petrol-fed machine-mower wounded his hand. The hand dressed, he returned to the 'chene' saying to it, rather than of it, 'Her thinks her's master of I. But her's mistook; I's the master of she.' Alongside this fork lay a piece of basketwork of Henry Stayt's who a hundred years ago was maker of beehives in *Witney Street*. Till the 1930's in one of the Church Green Almshouses was living a first-rate sempstress and upholsteress—Mary Ann Stayt. She it was of whom I tell, elsewhere, the story of the first 10s. piece she earned being proffered by her in a Burford shop as a 6d.¹ And that Mary Ann's daughter is now Burford's skilful weaver of Windrush mattings and baskets and repairer of rush-seated chairs. A portrait was there too of Thomas Bond senior, father of Henry Bond of my Chapter IX and owner of the Bell Foundry which stood where Lloyd's Bank now is. That Thomas's son, Thomas, is Burford's Bell Founder still. E. H. Wyatt, assistant master of Burford Council School, and grandson and son of owners of *The Lamb Inn* throughout a century, loaned a Stock Share Certificate of 'The Cheltenham and Oxford Direct Union Railway' which, in 1862, proposed to come by way of, and to have a station at, Burford. E. H. Wyatt's grandmother was perhaps the first person to travel to Burford by 'the new road' for coaches coming into Burford—the continuation of *Sheep Street* westward—constructed by John Lenthall in 1814 in order to remove Burford-

¹ 'A corner of the Cotswolds' (Methuen 1914).

Cirencester traffic out of his wood¹. The Coaching Horn lent by 'Jack' Holloway, motor proprietor and one of Burford's most esteemed characters, was blown for fifty-seven years at 6.30 each morning by Jack's father Walter Holloway in front of the *Lenthall Temperance Hotel*—now *Greyhounds*—at starting of the horsebus for Shipton. Beside this coaching horn lay the truncheon Walter Holloway's father used when a Keeper of Wychwood Forest.

Through these, and other, small but significant, possessions, by-gone periods quickened again. Indeed exhibits from one single house made living before us Burford customs of nearly two hundred years; because these—flax combs, spooling wheel, hat block, and straw hats—now came to the Exhibition through the very same door they had entered in the 1730's. For the house now lived in by the lender of these things—Jabez James Wall—had been the home of his great-great-grandfather—John Daniel—though then it was an Inn—*The Three Goats' Heads*. John Daniel's son James, born in 1756, was like his father before him a flax-dresser. This James and his wife had three children. Those three were—Ebenezer who sold his share of the business to get to the Baptist College at Bristol and thence to Ceylon as a missionary; Samuel who went to Luton and became a straw hat manufacturer; and a daughter Abiah who, having bought out her brothers from the Burford businesses, attempted, single-handed, to carry on both the inn and the flax-dressing. But finding this double task too onerous, she imported, as her manager, a James Wall of Eynsham whom shortly after she married. In Eynsham this James Wall's family had been 'roper's'. So he it was who added to Abiah's businesses the *Rope Walk*, later to become famous. (On into the 1860's a boy twisting rope turned in and out of the door of the Wall house to cross Burford *High Street* and, winding, come back over the road again.) This James—the present Jabez James Wall's grandfather—lived to the age of eighty; and into the 1870's he would recount vividly his doings of early in the century. On three nights of each week he visited 'to learn news of the world' some Burford inn—each of these three nights a different inn. On the alternating evenings—those of his home-staying—invariably he sent across to *The Wheat Sheaf*, at *Swan Lane* corner, for a pint and loan of the *Oxford*

¹ The line of the coach road thus superseded is still to be seen on the level of the river, at foot of the meadow west of *The Priory* wood.



CALENDARS, SOUTH, COURTYARD SIDE (*circa 1460*)



DOUBLE-FRONTED HOUSE IN SHEEP STREET

Journal. Meanwhile his wife Abiah, freed by her marriage with James Wall of the flax-dressing business, set up a 'Haberdashery' where she bleached, pressed and trimmed straw hats. Plaited straw she obtained in lengths, wholesale, from her brother Samuel at Luton. A 'Day Book' still existing shows the prosperity of this haberdashery business in 1798. Abiah and James had seven children the sixth of whom—Jabez Wall—carried on the Burford rope-making. It is the one son of that Jabez—Jabez James—who still maintains the Burford rope shop. Wall ropes gained and sustained for long their high reputation; they need no extolling. Yet among all loaned to our exhibition by Jabez James and his daughters, Abiah's hat block and straw hats speak of their day with most animation. So charming are those chapeaux, so large the number of them listed in the 'Day Book' as having been sold in Burford of the 1700's, as to make us realise that a considerably wider society than the one known to us through Jane Austen was at that period daintily apparelled. Butterflies those Burford damsels would appear beside the beetle-headed trousered girls of an after time! One other exhibit, long linked with Burford lives, though without quite the continuity of housing of the Jabez Wall possessions, I have particular reason for chronicling. Mrs. E. S. P. Haynes of *The Mill Cottage* lent a seventeenth century Dutch flower painting which had been in possession of a great-great-grandfather of hers—Thomas Gibson Willes. His daughter Letitia married a William Waller and she inherited this painting when she and her husband moved into *The Rectory* at Burford on the burning of *Chadlington Hall*¹; and it was their grandson—Samuel Edmund Waller—who during his life there painted 'The Empty Saddle' portraying *The Priory*, sombre and forsaken as since 1828 *The Rectory* back windows had been looking upon it. Again, a son of that painter in 1922 was to forge links with certain humble dwellers in Burford and in Burford's hamlets of a depth and importance not possible to exaggerate. For at that date Sir Maurice Waller K.C.B., then Chairman of the Prison Commissioners, made time for a long weekend stay at *Calendars* Burford to discuss there, in complete frankness, with the two earliest appointed Oxford County women Magistrates² the uphill path then to be trodden. No inconsiderable part of Maurice

¹ Letitia Waller lived to the age of 89, dying in Burford in December of 1883.

² Mary, Viscountess Harcourt; and the author.

Waller's success in his reforms came from the fact of himself being a Devonshire squire—good rider and keen fisherman. Thus, reformer as he was, he knew his county J.P. material—knew, for instance, that replacing the ancient 'Benefaction Trustees' of Oxford Prison (all of them Justices and mostly Bench Chairmen) by a modern Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society must be a circumlocutory process—would fail, as indeed it actually did fail; in any direct, or would-be legal, attack. As one thereafter to be long, both as Benefaction Trustee and as member of his Bench, under Captain Weyland's chairmanships, I often had cause to bless Maurice Waller's wisdom in quoting, for our guidance, his response to a questioner who demanded of him exactly what authority had the Home Office, or he as Chairman of Prison Commissioners, over a County Justice? 'Not any at all, my good man, not any at all', had been his reply. In Petty Courts, as in all other British governing institutions, torrents have run under bridges since 1922. However far from perfection now, improvement in Magistrates' Courts of the past twenty years has been immense; moreover the taunt of 'Gaol-bird', without discrimination as to the nature of the crime causing the committal, has died from the public's lips. Those two facts alone would have altered completely the heart-piercing story of a Burford prisoner's wife of the 1870's—a lily-white soul, but ever after her husband's committal for a poaching offence, finding she was regarded, and therefore regarding herself, as a social outcast. Yet those two changes—lighter prison sentences and a less cruel public—would have been futilities without a converted Prison administration. And that conversion, far more fundamental than any who have not studied eighteenth and nineteenth century Prison records can imagine, Maurice Waller, and those he chose to work with him, achieved. This achievement, reaching so far into lives ahead, gave a significance not easy to over-emphasise to the Exhibition loan of that Dutch flower-painting which had hung, from his great-great-grandfather's generation until Maurice Waller's own father's, in *The Rectory* at Burford.

As indicated earlier both the Priest's house and the Cemetery Chapel are worthy of their sites. Of the fourth of Russell Cox's new Burford buildings that fall within this Chapter's period—the one at the bottom of Guildenford which houses the present Vicar, the Rev. Fairfax Scott Tucker and his curate—beyond the fact that this

is pleasantly traditional in design and was erected and named 'St. John's House' shortly after Canon Emeris's retirement from Burford's ancient vicarage, there is nothing to note. The earliest notable commission obtained by Cox, at his settling in Burford in the year 1935, was the restoration of the interior of the seventeenth century-fronted house with five windows facing *The Tolsey* which is owned by Mrs. H. M. Warner. But it was by his first entire building—a commission immediately following on Mrs. Warner's from Dr. Cheatle to erect a cottage beside the Church in *Lawrence Lane*—that Russell Cox's intimate and adequate understanding of the requirements of Burford's tradition is in triumphant modesty demonstrated—how triumphantly is proved by comparison with the unmannerly-to-its-surroundings effect of the recently erected Grammar School Hall which ramparts the south side of that mediaeval lane. More lately Russell Cox has removed modern defacements from a house (formerly the home of W. J. Titcomb) purchased for his own occupation, its garden being skilfully enlarged by the additional purchase of a *High Street* house which until recently had been the shop of Drinkwater the butcher.

Outstanding among other restorations, by individual owners, are those recently effected above and behind E. F. Aldridge's bicycle shop by himself and his widowed daughter—the B.B.C. soloist Doris Evans. They have discovered a noble frontage, a fine Tudor fireplace and other survivals. Moreover this is the house which has for long been known to possess the striking stone-vaulted cellar illustrated by my late brother-in-law's photograph. At *Simon's Close*, on *High Street*, in addition to Miss Campbell Murdoch's interior renewals, her late brother—Charles Murdoch¹—completely restored from a ruinous condition, the eighteenth century Gazebo on an adjoining parcel of land. Till 1928 the *High Street* house with its unusual turret staircase that to-day is *Simon's Close*, had been home of Harry Smith and his wife; Smith, with his own hands, having stripped the front to reveal its original lath and plaster. After Smith's

¹ Charles Murdoch, himself, was decorated with the *Military Cross*. In 1914 his eldest brother, though much over-age for enlistment, had come from his home in Morocco and, by persistence, ultimately obtained a Scots Guard commission. He was mortally wounded on the Somme. Now in 1944 the only remaining brother—Captain Hugh Murdoch, R.N.—has the *Croix de Guerre*.

death it was bought by Miss Murdoch, originator of the Burford Hand Weaving Industry, who moved into it with her mother when dispossessed of the *Lawrence Lane* weaving sheds. Since 1913 the Murdochs had been settled in Burford. For the period of this World War Miss Murdoch has stored her weavers' looms in her recent extension of *Simon's Close* northward. Before the Murdochs' purchase of its ruin—since its erection indeed—the *gazebo* had belonged to the *Witney Street Great House*. The *Oxford Dictionary* definition of the word 'gazebo' is 'structure whence a view may be had' and this one commands the pleasing prospect of which, except in its upper storeys, *The Great House* is strangely devoid. Doubtless the *gazebo* provided Mrs. Sophia Cast and her friends with the outlook on the Church and the wold; though here it should be noted that, for what was lacking below, they would have found ample atonement by looking from their round attic apertures. Happily that attic prospect was recorded, in a sketch now reproduced, by the artist H. E. Conway when in 1917 he and his mother were living in *The Great House*. At this date (1944) *The Great House* is in the ownership of Mr. William Piercy and no list of recent interior restorations can be complete without mention of the admirable renewing of the Gallery in that house. Outstanding, also, among restoring of interiors, frequent from the early 1930's until now in Burford, has been repair of the Chapel, 'oriented' south and north, which adjoins the east front of *The Priory* and had been put there by Speaker Lenthall in the year 1662. *The Priory* had recently been bought, from the heirs of Emslie J. Horniman, by Commander A. R. J. Southby, R.N., M.P., when in 1938 he employed the firm of Messrs. Groves to build up this Chapel. Erroneous statements as to the antiquity of its original erection are not infrequent. Fact of its being Speaker Lenthall's creation and neither on the site nor having connection with the worshipping place of that Hospital of the Augustinian Rule from which *The Priory* has liked to derive its name, was sufficiently emphasised, had the instructed required any such emphasis, by Sir A. Southby's inducing (in commemoration of William Lenthall's 'Long Parliament' Speakership) the 1938 Speaker of the House of Commons—Captain the Hon. Edward Fitzroy—to visit Burford Priory and sponsor the 1938 re-opening.

From these jottings, respecting loans to that 1939 Burford Exhibi-

tion, and individual restorations, I turn now to the short summary of what has been said here and there in this book respecting Burford's domestic architecture through the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1929 Mrs. Conger Vanamee, writer of New York history, purchased *The Old Barn* (then recently owned by Canon Emeris for eighteen years and during that period known as *The Drill Hall*) making, out of it, an attractive, wholly south aspect, residence for herself. Part of her object in this purchase was to complete details connected with two of the first thorough, and informed, restorations of ancient Burford houses.¹ Earliest of these had been Canon Emeris's commission to Messrs. Groves to rebuild a dwelling—now known as *Wayne's Close*—that had once belonged to waggoner Leonard Mills (at the *Sheep Street* entrance to the *Waggoner's Close* which stretched through a central opening in the *Barn*, upwards from *Sheep Street* to 'Back Lane'). The second was the house (next on the east to *Wayne's Close*) now known as *Calendars*, from which through 1911 to 1928 Richard and Mary Sturge Gretton had been gradually removing the obscuring overlay. Subsequently, in 1929, Mrs. Vanamee's purchase (with *Greyhounds*) of the then recent extension of *Greyhounds* garden to embrace *The Old Barn* and *The Old Barn's* ground, enabled her generously to replace an upper terrace historically belonging to *Calendars* and to open a path from the *Sheep Street* level to 'Back Lane', near to, and exactly parallel with, the old track which had gone up through *Waggoner's Close* and the archway of *The Old Barn*.

Of this *Old Barn* I had found myself wondering on many occasions of its use during the 1913-15 zenith of Burford Country Dancing and of Cecil Sharp's visits to us (before the weight of 1916 had struck our world) at the hold it had on Burford—hold far deeper than that of the architecturally nobler barn at The Hill top. Partly this affection was founded on memories of Harvest Homes when, after long toiling hours and with unlighted streets, proximity of the feasting-place counted for much. Yet appreciation seemed to have

¹ Neither the 1904 throwing into one of two riverside cottages, nor Colonel La Terrière's 1908 rebuilding of *The Priory* ruins sufficiently for sale, can be counted 'complete' restorations. What is now *Ladyham* awaited construction by later owners; the whole present south wing of *The Priory* was added, rotting floors and so on removed by the buyer from La Terrière—Emslie J. Horniman.

focused itself in dramatic enjoyment and repetition of what is asserted to have been the death-bed speech of Waggoner Mills 'They wunt find it, they wunt find it', the 'it', according to whether the speaker is upholder or opponent of Mills's reputation, being treasure or bones of murdered carter!

Throughout the years expended by my husband and me in searching records of Burford—in London and Oxford as well as here—nothing impressed us more than did the degree in which history of the place remains in the, so constantly redrawn, leases and contracts respecting subdivisions of the *Closes*, behind the street houses. Exactly, these register waxing or waning of the prosperity of the individual burgess concerned—the owner of the front house. Before the late 1400's and early 1500's spate of rebuilding Burford houses in stone, the *Close* behind the frontage had contained only the loom sheds of the weavers with a loft or two for lodging those weavers and the householder's wool. All the rest of the *Close* remained garden or pasture. Only as the prosperity of an individual burgess decreased did tenements, presently developing into 'College Court', 'George Yard', and the 'Hill Courts' come into being *behind the main house*. The ease of this tenement-making arose from the fact that, under the stone archway from the street, had invariably been the paved passage through which the pack-horses carried their bales to the wool lofts and barn. To-day almost nothing remains of those early half-timbered burgess houses except the stone archways on the main streets. So complete is the disappearance of the dwellings originally entered by those archways that I have been constantly asked 'Where was this doorway moved from?' For the fact that these passages, along which the pack-horses carried the house-owner's wool bales in, and his woven cloth out, possessed *on either side of them* doors into the house proper, made such timber and plaster dwellings readily partitionable into halves; and, when, presently, owners of the two divisions each rebuilt in stone, architecturally unrelated halves.

After much thought and searching of documents, Richard Gretton concluded that the singular good fortune of *Calendars* having proved uniquely returnable to what had been its aspect in the late 1400's came from the fact of its having then, or about that time, been completely plastered over—its entity as a timbered house cased in—by some owner of its period. So complete had been this, almost con-

temporaneous, covering, that, though until the year 1911 few early features were apparent, by 1925 every aspect of a half-timbered fifteenth century wool merchant's dwelling house was revealed; even including such particulars as the appearing of the unbuilt-on space of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet left between the front house and the wool shed's inflammable contents. Explanation of the reason of the modern naming of the house *Calendars*, leads to speaking of the more than possible use of its building earlier than this domestic use of the closing 1400's. Richard Gretton's searching of manuscripts had led to the surmise that it had been *The Gild Meeting Room* which was recorded as existing in *Sheep Street* before the 1470's. There is at least certainty that what is now *Calendars'* twenty-five feet drawing-room has been a room considerably larger. Proof of this lies, not only in the uncharacteristic wall of rubble at the end of the room towards *Wayne's Close*, but also in these points, noted by that final authority on ancient English buildings—our friend Sir Charles Peers, C.B.E.—and also by Sir Herbert Baker, K.C.I.E. Firstly, a huge champered oak ceiling beam now lies *on* that rubble wall in present uselessness; secondly, remains of a mediaeval open fireplace are right against that west wall; thirdly, a large arch is cut away at that west wall; fourthly, upright beams spring from the ground to half-circle returns in what now is the third storey of the house—suggesting the present upper floorings may be intrusions on an original church-like room that rose uninterruptedly fifty feet from ground to roof peak. If, as may be, this had been *The Gild Room*¹—housed the, so to speak, sub-Committee which since 1350 had existed in ever increasing self-consciousness within the Burgesses' Court—this body, turning itself in the late 1400's into a Corporation, no doubt would then have moved into some official quarters such as *The Tolsey*.

Moreover fashion in the late 1400's demanded that Importances should be housed in buildings of stone. The reason of this was that craftsmen trained in the best tradition of stone carving and building were now remoulding Burford. That those craftsmen and their overseers had gained the ear of the town leaders is made obvious by the

¹ Lacking absolute proof of our house having been this *Gild Room*, we did not feel free to adopt the name. Consequently, unsure of its mediaeval title, we chose to come to our own time and in the name *Calendars* commemorate R. H. G.'s 'calendar' of Burford documents into *Burford Records* and my compiling (also in 1918) *A Calendar of the War*.

testamentary dispositions of those leaders. Burford men of substance such as John Windrush, the Spicers and John Stowe were adding, to the transforming of a plain Norman church into the magnificent building that is ours to-day, not only choice vestments and altar furnishings but numerous sidechapels and even, in some cases, specific portions of the main rebuilding such as Thomas Spicer's bequest for the raising of the tower and the adding of the spire. In order to picture at all adequately the Burford of the 1400's and early 1500's it is necessary to know something at least of the number and quality of the bequests which were gilding and regilding the coloured interior walls and kindling lamps glowing by night and by day on a dozen richly bedecked side-altars. And to some of us, through the 1900's in Burford, such imagining has been made easier by our witnessing the romance of John Meade Falkner's devotion to our Church. Slight allusion to this was made in Chapter IX. But here—in bringing up to the present my memories and in a Chapter that includes the date of Meade Falkner's burying beneath Burford Church Tower—rather more than allusion is necessary. On the July 1932 night through which, at his desire, his body was laid beneath the place of the pre-Reformation Rood screen the candle flames and the scarlet geraniums that encircled the coffin were no whit more vivid than his presence remained—even so much of his spiritual presence as had been evident to us here. Going almost immediately from taking his Oxford degree, to tutor the boys of the Noble family in Newcastle-on-Tyne (though already lover and historian of the Cotswolds) the Nobles had swiftly discovered the wide range of his abilities. Thereafter—to shorten a story full of incident and interest—there was no check in his career until, as Chairman of Armstrong-Whitworth, on evening after evening of summer and winter he came to stand at the door of Burford Vicarage carrying an ecclesiastical treasure which he, in his unceasing travel, had redeemed from ignorant use or misuse in some unfrequented corner of Europe. Yet these things had never been unfairly obtained; because though astute chairman of a vast enterprise, Meade Falkner was an incorruptible Christian—writer of *The Nebuly Coat*. Photographs of persons are not suited to this book. Yet, in a day when individuality and the independently characterful are all too rare, picture of that pair within the Vicarage hallway—the six foot just-arrived tendering his bulky package, and the shorter

figure receiving it—should be perpetuated, not only in their appearance but also in their intercourse. For, invariably as the donor insisted that there must be no publicity respecting his gifts, so invariably did the receiver—though his eyes were alight at rarity of the *objets*—emphasise the risk they must necessarily undergo; because, over and above his artist appreciation his pastorate must prevail. And never so long as he remained in Burford should its Church suffer a locked door or a sacristan's patrol. Among those romantically arriving parcels have come to us our Spanish Processional Cross, splendid Altar frontals, Italian, Spanish, French—loveliest and most delicate the festival cloth for the Lady Chapel altar—silver Crucifix and Candlesticks furnishing that altar; and the jewelled Cross that glows through the dimness of St. Thomas's. The Whall window and the resurrection—no less—of the Lady Chapel by Meade Falkner and his friend have been told of in Chapter IX. The two luminous stained glass windows of Falkner's in that Lady Chapel, with, as a third, Canon Emeris's own window beside and matching, are last tracks of feet that surely show 'beautiful on the mountains', even on the present 'mountain growths of sorrow'.

However our immediate concern is not with ancient or modern enhancements of the Church, but is with the re-shaping of Burford dwelling-houses by residence here, at height of the English wool period, for some hundred years of skilled stone-masons whose stay the wealth pouring into the Church was prolonging. Under their influence most half-timber houses were destroyed; all of importance being now rebuilt in stone. Pattern of the earliest of these we still possess in the *Church Green Almshouses*. These, completed at the death of their donor 'the Kingmaker' in 1471, show us the type of the late 1400's—narrow doorways with pointed heads, square-headed windows divided by stone tracery into more than one light, and a long unbroken roof line. In a further thirty or forty years, that is at the opening of the 1500's, some modifications appeared, though the main features—the flat frontage, unbroken roof lines, and decorated windows—remained. An excellent example of such modification is the house that forms the south corner of *Church Lane* with the *High Street*¹—its doorway style has developed, the whole building is

¹ Its defacements were removed and its original structure restored, by Emslie J. Horniman, who presented it to the Burford Boys' Grammar School.

loftier in each storey and a third storey has been added by dormers in the roof. This pattern of the wholly stone-built house (succeeding the timbered one, such as *Calendars*) prevailed in Burford from 1500 almost into the 1600's.

Then, shortly before 1600, this style was superseded by the style of Simon Wisdom's house, now labelled *Wisdom*, at the bottom of the *High Street*. In this, built in the year 1576, the top floor windows are no longer set back in the roof as dormers, they are brought out to the line of the frontage in bold gables that rise as high as the roof ridge, the result being that the roof line no longer appears as a straight one. It is broken by the tall gables rising in the front of it and carrying their ridge back to it; moreover the long gutters or valleys at the junctions of these gables with the roof, break the upper structure into bays. This type is worthy successor of the early Tudor one—unconcerned with ornamentation but achieving distinction by its varied lines and good proportions. In other examples of this time and type we find slight modifications. The square-headed doorways persist; but in a few cases where a wider entrance is needed, as at *The George Inn*, a depressed arch is found. Also a double-fronted building in *Sheep Street* (the third house westward from *Calendars*) modifies the type to a pattern commoner in Chipping Campden than in Burford—this frontage, instead of being flat, consists of two bays rising from the ground to the eaves.

In the early part of the 1600's there was, as we should expect, little alteration. The just-described good stone buildings would not need replacement or renewal swiftly, though, because glass was now becoming more obtainable, such frontages as the one with wider window-openings and the fine barge-boarded gables, standing on the East side of *High Street*—the butcher's shop, opposite the end of *Sheep Street*—probably belongs to this period.

However the late 1600's saw a large amount of building. The *High Street* front of *The Vicarage* bears date 1672; a *Sheep Street* house is marked 1696; and *Kit's Quarry* house Christopher Kempster built in 1698. From these we are able to date *The Rectory* and 'Mr. Robert Glynn's tenement', now *The Great House*. Also reason has been given earlier in this book for supposing that the red brick frontage of *The Bull Inn* belongs to this, late Jacobean, period.

1700 to 1800 brought those straight frontages, masking ancient

backs, which I have already described—most stately of these, and little as any revealing the building of much earlier date behind, being the five-windowed façade, across High Street, in face of *The Tolsey*.

Of the 1900's worthy contributions to Burford architecture, and the numerous admirable restorations, this chapter already has told.

★ ★ ★

For over four years now these Burford buildings have been gazing on the motley procession all British townships have been sorrowfully witnessing. From 1940 refugees (both as suppliants and as buyers of houses) and now, in September 1944, a new influx of these fleeing from self-propelled bombs; soldiers and airmen packed into every available building—Yorkshires, Manchesters, East Lancashires, Royal Scots, King's Own, Westminsters, Californians, Virginians, New Englanders, New Yorkers, mingling their accents with our Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire speech. Ceaselessly all have been moved on by the devouring demands of the war. Even those paratroopers who last Sunday lazed in our *High Street Vicarage* to-day are among the slain heroes of Arnhem.

Yet direst experiences of arriving and losing are in no way Burford's particularly. Therefore chronicling the details of them has no place in this book. But upon our structure, where centuries cling, a few scars will show after this war—the twelfth century archway entrance to what was *Cob Hall*, not tall enough for some of the loaded army lorries, has been broken and will require wholly resetting. A Sherman tank, plunging into the river *Windrush*, has smashed the parapet of our fifteenth century bridge. Such material dents Burford will show after the cataclysm—insignificant beside damage even to nearby townships and villages. Inevitably future recorders will write of Burford's having escaped the destructions of 1940 to 1945. Partially, even in the deepest sense, this will be true; because since the mowing down of our young men from 1914 to 1918, in the main, Burford's inhabitants have been too elderly for this war's central activities. Yet of the, comparatively few, youths who latterly have joked and walked and ridden about Burford full toll has been taken. For instance, looking on me as I write to-day is a copper Memorial plaque to 'Emilia', from the children frequenting this house when

through the 1920's she served it. And, of the three boy, alongside the five girl, donors, named on that tablet, two have gone out not to return. One, the gayest, a Gordon Highlander surrounded at St. Valerie-en-Caux in 1940, dying, after more than a year's imprisonment in Germany, in a German Prison Hospital¹; the other 'missing' from his North Sea plane and his body only lately reported to have been washed ashore and buried in Holland last year². But it goes without saying that no more than those ceaseless military processions and convoys do such drawn-out torturings—such dimming of radiances—belong peculiarly to Burford. Consequently this Chapter must close, even more emphatically than Chapter IX closed, with emphasis on the fact that the bulk of contemporary Burford is not the Burford of story. The age-old localism, buttressed until yesterday by determined insulation, who has insight enough to balance its loss with the gain of its going? I merely assert that to communicate one's relish of half a lifetime in Burford would necessitate the recounting of tale after tale of pungent comment, chiefly simple folk 'getting back' at even suspected pompousness or self-importance. The most vivid examples which crowd to mind of such, accidentally overheard or percolating, comments are unquotable; because of the living persons their exact hitting of the Bull's Eye must wound. But among the comparatively unbarbed that remain in my mind, are old John's—he was driver of Holloway's horse-bus—habit of describing to passengers he brought from *Shipton* station the chatelaine of a near-by Manor House (actually of unimpeachable minor 'county' ancestry) as so would-be managing to the likes of him in Oxfordshire because she had 'done finely as flower-seller in Piccadilly', and Emslie Horniman's enjoyment in overhearing a yokel's allusion to a large-sized canary-coloured Horniman motor as 'that thur tea-caddy'.

Virtues were not unappreciated in old-time Burford; but it was failings that were selected for feasting upon; they were more flavoured; and 'foreigners'—all born outside of Burford—tastiest of viands. Less characterful, but certainly less caustic, Burford tongues have been growing. Hearts are softer; elderly men, who earlier spoke little of

¹ Chapter IX, page 113, Note 2. This—David Sturge Crichton, Lieut. 1st Batt. Gordon Highlanders—is the 'small son' of that Christmas 1918 Note.

² Emslie Horniman's eldest grandson who had inherited his grandfather's historical interests.

SINCE 1928

their last war campaigning distresses, recount those now in horrified reverence at the endurance of 'far worse' military tasks by the serving youth of this day. Moreover common tragedies of two wars have, at last, stretched feeling beyond our geographical confines. Not long ago Burford's attitude, to mile-distant Fulbrook for instance, matched that of the U.S.A. middle-westerner, before Pearl Harbour's disaster, to Europe!

INDEX

- Abercorn, Lady, 57
 Lord, 57
 Agricultural Labourers' Union, 107-
 108, 119-20
 Agricultural Wages Board, 117-21
 Aldridge, E. F., 17, 143
 Almshouse, *Church Green*, 39, 75, 96, 149
 Amaury, Count of Evreux, 63
 Anglo-Saxons, 14
 Ansells, family of, 91-2, 99
Antiquarian Itinerary, The, 91
Antiquities of Oxfordshire, 56
 Apper, Thomas, 59
 Arch, Joseph, 107
 Archers, 19
 Arnhem, 151

 Bailiffs, 50-1, 71, 73-4, 77-8, 82-3, 85, 87
 Balls, 88
 Banbury, John, 96
 Barn, Old, The, 138, 145-6
 Bartholomews, 31, 79
Battle Edge, Burford, 14
 Bayeux, Odo Bishop of, 63, 130
 Bayliss, 97
 Beauchamps, 46, 64
Beauchamp's Career, 118
 Beechey, Sir William, R.A., 61
 Beeching, Dean, 109, 111, 133
 Billmen, 19
 Bishop, Henry, 18
 Bond, Henry, 121, 122-7
 Bookshop, 32
Bosworth Field, 18, 135
Bradshaw, 129
 Brampton, William, 19, 135

 Bridge, Burford, 11, 18, 24, 89, 91, 99, 151
 Bronze Age, 13
 Bryce, Byrne, H., 111
Burb-Ford, Bureford, Burford, 14
 Burford Church, 36-53, 95, 103, 104-7,
 148-9
Burford Fields, 34
 Burgage Rent Rolls, 30
 Burgesses, 30, 31, 74-87, 147
 Burgess, Rev. J. H., 48, 101, 103, 104
 Burney, Fanny, 109
 Byron, Sir John, 22-4

 Cakebread, John, 18
 Cantilupe, William de, 63
Calendars, 16 note, 111, 145, 146-7
 Calendaring, Burford manuscripts, 65
 Cary, Lucius, Viscount Falkland, 51,
 55-6, 64
 Cass, Rev. W. A., 104-7, 109
 Castell, Thomas, 33
 Cemetery, 136-7, 142
 Chapman, James, 97
 Charles I, 25, 31, 57
 Charles II, 31, 32
 Charters, 68-80
 Chartism, 119
 Chavasses, 92
 Cheatles, 65, 98-9, 102
 Church, 36-53, 95, 103, 104-7, 148-9
Church Green, 97
 Church wardens, 50-2, 90
Church Lane, 92
 Civil War, 23-9, 47, 131
 Coaching, 33-5, 92, 92 note, 94, 128-9
Cob Hall, 99, 102, 103, 151

INDEX

- Coalition Ministry (after war of 1914-1918), 117
- 'College', *The*, 89-90, 146
- Cook, Frank, 138-9
- Conway, L. R., 138
- Conway, H. E., 111, 144
- Corn Bounty, 117
- Cox, Russell, 136, 142-3
- 'Corporation', *The*, 63-87
- Crichton, David Sturge, M.A., 113 note, 134
- Crichton, David, 152 note
- Cromwell, Oliver, 26, 28, 81
- Cross, The High*, 19, 19 note, 23
- Crumplin'*, 135, 135 note
- Dalby, Richard, 59
- Dallas, Rev. A. R. C., 48, 95-6, 106
- Dean, Cornet, 27-9
- Despenser, Hugh le, 63
- Eleanor, widow of Hugh le Despenser, 63
- Hugh le, son of the preceding, 63
- Edward le, 63
- Thomas le, 63
- Dissolution of the Monasteries, 54, 74
- Dragon*, Midsummer Eve, 14
- Drew, Jim, 122
- Domesday*, 11, 14
- Dudley, John Duke of Northumberland, 62
- Earthworks, on Cotswolds, 13-14
- East, Charles, 93, 97
- Eden, Helen Parry, 111
- Edward, son of the Duke of Clarence, 62, 64
- Elizabeth, Queen, 19-20
- Emeris, The Rev. Canon W. C. (the late) 36, 49, 52-3, 109, 131, 136-7, 145, 148-9
- Enclosure, *Burford Fields*, 34
- Evans, C. A., 138
- 'Jack', 138 note
- Eynesdale, Peter, 21
- Eyston, family of, 18
- Fairs, (Town's Fair on Holyrood Day; Lord of the Manor's Fair on St. John's Day), 133
- Fairfax, 27-8
- Falkland Hall*, *The*, 11, 121 note
- Falkland, Lucius Cary, Viscount, 51, 55-6, 64
- Falkner, J. Meade (the late), 53, 148-9
- Faulkner, William, 101, 103, 103 note, 128
- Fettiplace, family of, 94, 94 note, 109
- Fisher, Rev. John, 101, 101 note
- Fisher's History of Burford*, 100, 108
- Fitzhamon, Earl of Gloucester, 15, 63, 68-9
- Font, *The*, 36, 47
- Forest Fair, 93-4
- Fortescue, Sir John, 64, 78
- Francis, family of, 137
- Friendly Institution*, Burford, 102
- Gast, Mrs., 89, 109, 144
- Gazebo, 143-4
- Geoffrey de Mandeville, 63
- Gild, *The*, 12, 15, 37-8, 46, 48, 62, 68-75, 77
- Gildenford*, 100, 142
- Gloucester, 8th Earl of, Gilbert de Clare, 63
- 9th Earl of, 63
- 10th Earl of, 63
- Glyn, Christopher, Vicar, 29
- 'Glyn, Mr. Robert', 30
- Grammar School, 21, 58-61, 83, 99-100
- 102, 110, 127-8, 149 note

INDEX

Great House, The, 30, 92, 132, 144
Great Western Railway, 11, 98, 128-9,
 139-40
Greenaway, Charles, 64
 Charlotte S., 64
Gretton, Richard Henry, M.A. (the late)
 author of *Burford Records*, 49, 65,
 131, 132 note, 134 note, 136, 146-7
 Mary Sturge, 130-2, 146-7
Greyhound, The, 32
Greyhounds, 110, 132, 139, 145
Gild Meeting Room, 146-7
Gordon Highlanders, 152 note
Guy and Pauline, 109

Hamilton, Catherine, 57
Harcourt, Robert, 45
 Mary Viscountess, 141 note
Harman, Edmund, 42
Harris, John, 43
Heresy, Charges of, 21-3
Heylin, Peter, 60
Historical Manuscripts Commission, 65
Holbein, Painting of Sir Thomas More's
 family, 57
Holland-Martin, Robert, 111
Holloway, Jack, 140
 Walter, 140
Horniman, E. J. (the late), 110, 128, 136,
 144, 145 note, 149 note, 152 note
Hospital of St. John the Evangelist (present
 'Priory'), 54-8, 95, 110, 144
Hospital, Cottage, 99, 99 note
Hunt, John, 43
Hunt, 'Mr. Surgeon, son of James Hunt
 surgeon', 92
Huntley, Thomas, 93
Hurst, A. R., 55, 58, 64, 110
 R. H., 58, 64
 M., 112
Hutton, Canon (the late), 109

Hughes, Wyndham, 111

James, William, 116
Jameson, Storm, 6, 130-1
Jenkinson, Charles, Lord, 61
Joan, daughter of Edward I, 63
John, afterwards King of England, 63
 Earl of Warwick, 64
Jones, L. S. R., Headmaster of Burford
 Council School, 33 note, 134

Kempster, Christopher, 29, 101, 133,
 133 note
Kettlewell, Captain and Mrs., 112
Kingmaker, Warwick The, 47, 64, 135,
 135 note, 149
Kite, William, 113-14
Kit's Quarry house, 29, 35, 101, 116, 133,
 133 note, 150
Knollis, The Hon. Rev. Francis, 86, 92
 The Rev. James, 86

Leggare, John, 42, 53
Lords of the Manor, 63-4
Lenthall, William, Speaker of Long
 Parliament, 56-7, 64
 John, 57
 William, 57
 John, 58
 William, 58
 John, 35, 58, 92
 William John, 58, 95, 95 note (who
 severed connection with Burford)
 Frederick George, 95
 Edmund Henry, 95 note, 45
 Walter Ellison, 95 note
Littledale, The Rev. A. V., 136

Maces, 'Corporation', 65-7
Manor House, 15, 19
Market, 15, 23, 68, 77, 79-80

INDEX

- Market Cross, 23
- Marriott, Captain E. J. B., 98, 101, 105,
105 note
- Martyrs, 21-3
- Merywether, Richard, 21
- Mills, Leonard, 145-6
- Monk's History of Burford*, 108
- Montague, C. E., 116-17
- More, William, 37
- Morris, William, 105-7, 106 note
- Manuscripts Commission, 65
- Murdoch, family of, 112, 143-4, 143 note
- Muster Roll, 19
- Napoleonic War, 90-1
- Noble, Sir John, 53, 148
- Normandy, 130
- Odo, Bishop of Bayeux (Burford's first
Lord of the Manor, 1085), 63, 130
- Osbaldeston, John, 42
- Packhorses, 146
- Parish Registers, 52
- Pittaway, family of, 137
- Police Station, 103
- Posting, 31
- Priory, The* (Mansion built in sixteenth
century on site of small Augustinian
Hospital), 54-58, 95, 110, 141,
144
- Pryor, John, 43, 57
- Pynnock, John, 18, 39, 44, 46
- Pytt, Robert Henry, 92
- Races, Burford, 31-2
- Ralph de Morthermer, 63
- Rectory, The*, 30, 101, 109, 132, 133,
141-2
- Richard de Clare, 8th Earl of Glou-
cester, 63
- Richards, Benjamin, 137
- Robert of Gloucester, natural son of
Henry I, 63
- Rupert, Prince, 25
- Saddlers, 19, 32, 93 (skilled present re-
presentative is W. H. Bowl)
- School Board *versus* Church School,
104
- Seals, Burford, 66-7
- Sedley, Anthony, 47
- Sharp, Cecil, 145
- Shops, mediaeval, 17-18, 32
- Simon's Close, 143
- Smith, Harry, 122-3
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Build-
ings*, 105
- Southby, Sir A., R.N., M.P., 144
- Spicer, Alys, 40
John, 40, 148
Thomas, 41, 148
- Stowe, John, 18, 148
- Sworn Lays* house, 90
- Sylvesters, 31, 42, 99
- Symmons, George, 32, 44
- Tanfield, Sir Lawrence, 55, 64, 78-81
Lady, 64, 81
Elizabeth, 55-6
- Tanneries, 91, 99
- Taylor, Henry, 122
- Tewkesbury, 62-3
- Titcomb, W. J., 136, 143
- Tobacco-Pipe factory, 101
- Tokens, Burford, 32-3, 33 note
- Trevelyan, George Macaulay, O. M.,
118
- Tolsey*, 18, 33, 100, 135, 147
- Tucker, Rev. Fairfax Scott, 142
- Turrets, *Falkland Hall, Witney Street*, 11,
99, 121 note

INDEX

Upton fields, 34

Vicarage, 29, 49, 136, 143, 148-9

Wall, family of, 140-1

Waller, Letitia, 141, 141 note

Sir Maurice, K.C.B., 141-2

Samuel Edmund, 141

William, 98 note, 101, 141

Warbeck, Perkin, 62

Warwick, Isabel, Countess of, 64

Henry Beauchamp, Duke of, 64

Anne, Lady, daughter of the Duke of

Warwick, 64

Richard Neville, Earl of,—'The King-

Maker', 47, 64, 135, 135 note, 149

Anne, Countess of, widow of the

King-Maker, 64

John, Earl of, 64

Watersheds, 13

Wattle and daub, 16, 146

Wayne's Close, 110, 145

Welshmen, 20

Wesleyan Chapel, 97

Wiggins, Frederick C., 114-16

Wilmot, John, Earl of Rochester, 60

Window glass, 23

Windrush, 13, 91, 151

Windrush, John, 148

Wisdom, Simon, 20-1, 40, 59-60,
150

Woolmen, 16

Workhouse, 90

Wren, Christopher, 133

Wyatt, family of, 139

Wychwood Forest, 93-4, 96

Youde, Mary Jane, 58, 64

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1



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